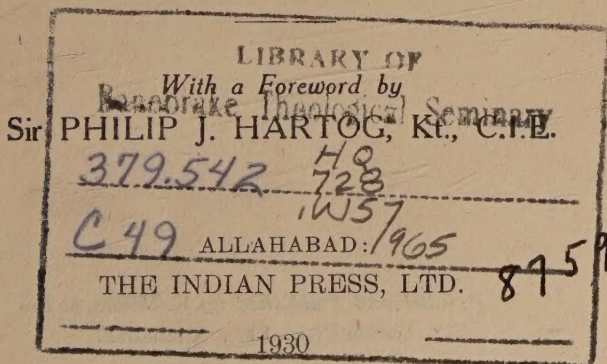


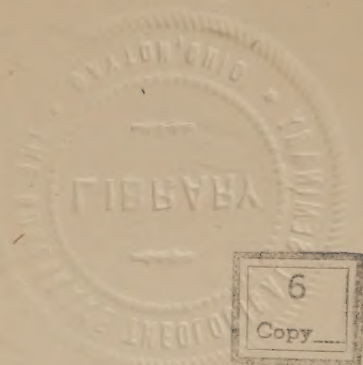
The History of Rural Education

IN

THE UNITED PROVINCES OF
AGRA & OUDH
(1840—1926)

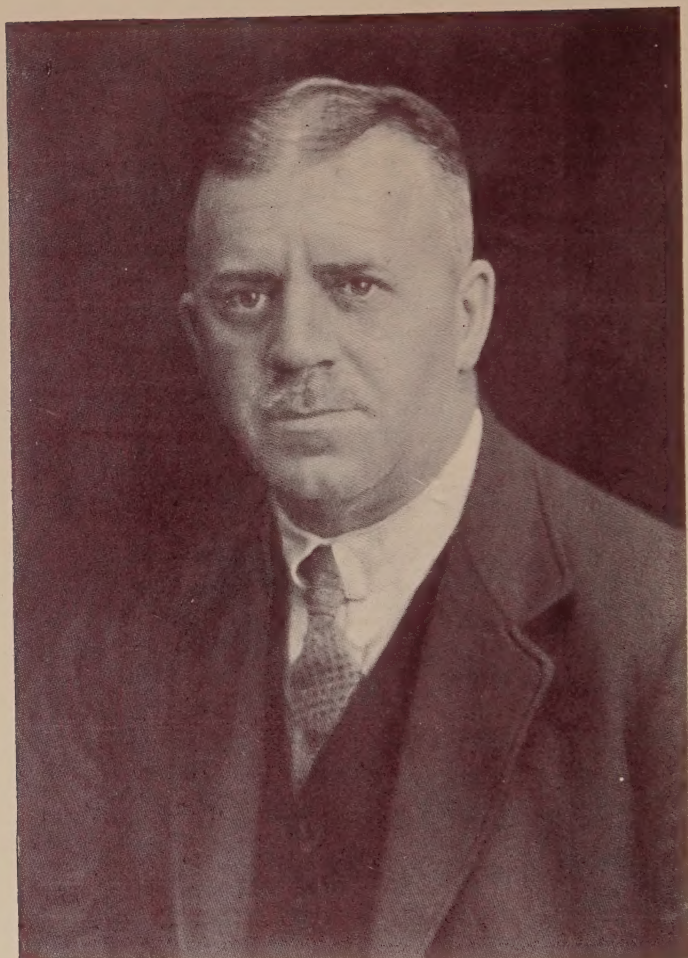
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*Printed and Published by K. Mittra, at the
Indian Press, Ltd., Allahabad.*



MR. A. H. MACKENZIE, M.A., C.I.E.
Director of Public Instruction, U.P.

This book is affectionately dedicated to
Mr. A. B. Mackenzie, M.A., C.I.E.,
Director of Public Instruction, U. P.,
who has been the wise counsellor and
inspiring friend of workers in the field
of education in the United Provinces.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

WHEN I decided to transfer my activities from the sphere of the secondary to that of primary education, I discovered that I knew but little about its past in the province in which my work lay. In order to prepare myself for my work I decided to study primary education in the United Provinces. I divided my studies into three parts, viz., a longitudinal section of the rural education from 1840 to 1926, a transverse section of that education at the present time, and a study of the problems of rural education with the object of suggesting means for solving them. The present volume is the result of the first study. It was written mostly in England.

The main object of this book is to give in a short compass a continuous narrative of the progress of rural education in the United Provinces and to put the salient features of its history before the reader. The period 1921—1926 is too recent for treatment in a historical narrative. But as the principle of compulsion for rural areas was accepted in 1926 it was necessary for me to bring down my narrative to that date.

The reader would perhaps expect in a book like this some definite conclusions, anticipations and suggestions for the improvement of rural education in these provinces. But as I propose to deal with

them rather in detail in the remaining two books, I have avoided them as far as I could in this volume.

My thanks are due to my professor Dr. J. Dover Wilson, M.A., D.Litt., Sir Claude de la Fosse, Kt., C.I.E. and to Mr. A. E. Twentyman, M.A., for guidance in the study of the subject, and for numerous helpful suggestions. I am much indebted to Sir Philip J. Hartog, Kt., C.I.E., who was good enough to go through the manuscript and to write a prefatory note, and also to Sir Selwyn H. Fremantle, Kt., C.S.I., C.I.E., for going through certain chapters and making a number of valuable suggestions. I also gratefully acknowledge the encouragement I have received from Mr. H. R. Harrop, M.A., I.E.S., in the publication of this book. My friends Mr. F. Fuest, Prof. D. S. Dubey, M.A., LL.B. and Mr. G. V. Rao, M.A., LL.B., have helped me at different stages in the preparation of this book and I thankfully acknowledge their help.

ALLAHABAD,

S. N. C.

November 25, 1929.

PREFATORY NOTE

I GLADLY accede to Mr. S. N. CHATURVEDI'S request that I should write a prefatory note to his book on "THE HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN THE UNITED PROVINCES." Mr. Chaturvedi writes with a wide knowledge of primary education not only in India but in England and in continental countries, and he has taken a wide view of his subject. His book will, I am convinced, be of value to educationists in the United Provinces and to their colleagues all over India, and I hope that similar histories may be written of educational activities in the other major provinces. Although I appreciate the very serious value of Mr. Chaturvedi's work, I must not be taken to agree with all his conclusions or forecasts. In particular, I think he is pessimistic with regard to the possibilities of immediate progress in the education of girls, which I regard as of supreme importance for the United Provinces as well as for the rest of India. The obstacles are undoubtedly great, but I am convinced that they can and will be overcome. Mr. Littlehales, C.I.E., Educational Commissioner with the Government of India, in the Ninth

Quinquennial Review of the Progress of Education in India (1922—27) writes as follows¹:

“Probably at no period in India’s history have there been more hopeful signs for the future in regard to the education and position of women than at the present moment, when the public demand for the education of girls and women is organised and vocal. This demand is being made not only by the women themselves but also by some of the enlightened men of the country who have realised that by educating a woman you are not merely educating an individual but producing the means of spreading the results of education through a whole family.”

It is of course true that merely to multiply schools for girls under men-teachers who are past their work, and without efficient women-teachers, is a sheer waste of money. Plans have to be made for the special training of women-teachers and such training will take time, but it is not too early to begin taking steps, and steps on a considerable scale. I am well aware of the difficulties caused by *purdah*, and the education of *purdah* girls must be far more costly than the education of *non-purdah* girls. But here again I trust public opinion to overcome one of the gravest obstacles to the progress of Indian education.

¹ Vol. I, p. 7.

I venture, finally, to refer the reader to the chapter on Girls' and Women's Education contained in the Review of the Growth of Education in British India by the Auxiliary Committee of the Indian Statutory Commission and to the Conclusion of that Review.²

SIMLA,
October, 1929.

P. J. HARTOG.

² Published by the Government of India, Central Publication Branch (1929) ; price Re. 1.

INTRODUCTION

THE Education of the rural population of India is a problem of more than local interest. It is at once local, imperial and international. India has one-eighth of the population of the world and two-thirds that of the British Empire ; and nine-tenths of this population live in rural areas. Although the people are cultured and have traditions of a civilization centuries old, the extent of illiteracy among them is very great. The percentage of literacy in India in 1921 was just over 8 per cent [for both sexes]. This illiteracy is not only a disgrace, but is full of danger ; for a credulous, superstitious and ignorant peasantry—especially if open to propaganda—is very dangerous not only for the state concerned but for the peace of the whole world. For an example we have only to turn to Russia.

The United Provinces is the second largest province in India in point of population and has 89 per cent of its inhabitants living in villages. For this reason, the importance of rural education in the province cannot be overrated. And as the literacy is so low, the problem of rural education in actual fact resolves itself into one of primary education.

The British found the Province at a very low ebb of education, and have from the middle of the

last century made efforts to disseminate instruction in the rural areas. The indigenous schools, although on the decline, provided facilities for education for those who cared for it. Some of them were of a higher order, but most of them were small village schools giving the minimum of education likely to be of practical use. Their influence on the character of their pupils was considerable. The original intention of the Government was to use the existing schools, and, through them, to give an education which might fit the peasants to understand the new laws and their own rights and liabilities under them. But before long a policy of opening state schools was adopted. These schools were free and were better patronised, and there was no room for two sets of schools, and as a result the indigenous schools died out. In fact even aided schools, run on the pattern of the state schools, could not flourish. Private enterprise in the Province could not conduct schools as efficiently as the State, and as efficiency was the foremost consideration, there was but little chance for aided or indigenous schools.

The Government controlled education, but it was anxious to secure the co-operation of the people. Several experiments, e.g., school committees, district committees, etc., were made. From the time the principle of local self-government was agreed upon, the control of rural education has been more and more given to the popularly elected

representatives, and now the entire administration in the rural areas is in the hands of the district boards which are popularly elected bodies. With the introduction of the Constitutional Reforms, the direction and policy of education have been transferred to Indian Minister responsible to the popular legislature.

The educational authorities in the Province have cared more for the quality than for the quantity of rural education. The curriculum was constantly improved and attempts were made to adjust it to the needs of the people. Attention was given to the training of teachers, their pay and prospects. Buildings and equipment were also cared for. Attempt was made to provide suitable books. And there is no doubt that the foundations of rural education have been soundly laid.

The result in quantity is not so encouraging. The educational authorities could only provide secular education and they did it, but they could not compel people to make use of it. The demand for it was limited to certain castes and professions, and so long as their demand was not satisfied, every increase in expenditure on education yielded a better return. But as the spontaneous demand was gradually satisfied, fresh expenditure gave increasingly poor returns. New schemes and programmes were launched for the expansion of rural education, but they aimed at increasing the supply without creating new demands, and so they could not bring

the day of universal literacy much nearer. On account of social and economic causes the masses in the rural areas did not care for the kind of education given in schools. Even those who sent their children to schools did not allow them to remain there for a sufficiently long period to derive any lasting benefit from it. Thus the weakness of the voluntary system became apparent and compulsion became the only alternative.

The history of rural education in the province is thus a record of successful attempts to lay sound foundations of vernacular education. The Vernacular Middle and the Primary schools compare favourably in everything except numbers with those of most other Provinces. For this slow progress in quantity the Department of Education is not responsible, for in no country have the masses been reached without compulsion. The Government was not against compulsion in principle, but the magnitude of the expenditure required and the fear of possible oppression deterred it from introducing it. It believed too that the time for compulsion had not arrived. The first step in this direction was, however, taken in 1926 and the local bodies are now authorised to introduce it if they like.

Thus in 1926 the period in which attempts were made to disseminate education in the rural areas solely on a basis of voluntary attendance was closed, and a new era of extension on a compulsory basis has begun. The old order laid sound foundations

and traditions of efficient education, and now it will be easier to extend education on a compulsory basis without running the risk of making it so superficial as to be of little or no permanent value.

THE HISTORY OF RURAL EDUCATION IN THE UNITED PROVINCES OF AGRA AND OUDH

*(Formerly known as the North-Western Provinces
of Bengal.)*

CHAPTER I

THE VILLAGER

A. HIS MEANS

THE United Provinces of Agra and Oudh are pre-eminently rural. Of the 46,510,668 inhabitants, only 10·6 per cent live in towns; the rest, 89·4 per cent, spend their lives in villages.¹ The average population dependent on a square mile of cultivated land is 677—or in other words, each person has less than an acre as his share. But this average varies in different districts; in some this average is as high as 1½ acres. Very little more land is available for cultivation. Thus pressure on land is very great, and, agriculture being the staple industry of the country, competition to rent land

¹ These figures are taken from the Census Report of 1921.

is very keen. As most of the land belongs to the zamindars (landholders), the competition raises the rent considerably. On account of old and out-of-date methods of cultivation (which persist at least in part owing to small and scattered fields) the produce of land is comparatively small.

Villages in the Province are of all sizes ; but a fair-sized village has a hundred or even more houses. The zamindar sometime lives in the village. He is usually of a higher caste. Most of the houses are mud houses. The village generally has a temple or a mosque, and a common meeting-place called a ' chaupal.'

The population of the villages may be divided into different kinds of groups, e.g., caste, occupation, or economic condition. Although sometimes the two overlap, yet the caste position of a person is not necessarily the same as his economic position. In fact it is difficult in a village to make any division on the basis of wealth except perhaps by putting the zamindar and the money-lender in one, and the rest of the villagers in the other class. This latter has its grades, but the difference between them is not very great.

There are four castes among the Hindus, and although Islam does not recognise the caste system, a Syed has a much caste consciousness (especially when it comes to marriage relations) in his relation to a Julaha as a Brahman is said to possess in his relation to the lowest castes. The castes among

the Hindus are Brahmans (priests), Kshattris or Thakurs (warriors), Vaisyas (merchants), Sudras (artisans). A fifth caste 'the depressed caste' the members of which do very lowly work. The first three are regarded as high and the others as low castes. The former have a higher social position, especially the Brahmans, who are a sort of conscience-keeper of the rest. Brahmans, Kayasths (a sub-caste of Kshattris) and Vaisyas are 'literary' castes, for their occupations demand some learning. The landlords generally come from the Kshattri caste. And as formerly in India the title to land had to be maintained by physical force (the old Sanskrit proverb said **वीरभोग्या वसुंधरा** 'land is enjoyed by the brave'), they specialised in fighting and neglected the pursuit of letters. Among the Muhammadans, Syeds, Sheikhs, and Moghuls were regarded as belonging to high castes. The first two have literary traditions. But the number of high caste people in a village is relatively small, except in villages which are populated wholly by a particular caste. The bulk consists (for our purpose) of castes which have but little or no tradition of *literacy*.

Now, if we divide the village according to occupations, we find that the population can be divided into two divisions, agriculturists and artisans. The former are about 80 per cent, and the latter 20 per cent of the population. Agriculture and the village cottage industries, as they have been

carried on up till now, do not require any knowledge of the three R's, for the crafts and methods descend from one generation to another.

The economic condition of the people varies in different parts, and there is a wide difference of opinion regarding it. But it may be taken for granted that the Zamindars (who form about one-fifth of the rural population) are fairly well off, but heavy expenses of marriages, death ceremonies, litigation, etc., leave them but little margin, if they are not actually in debt. Those cultivators who have statutory rights in land are also well-off for their position. The vast majority of 'ryots' (peasants) are petty tenants. They come from all castes but most of them are from the Sudra (fourth) and fifth castes. Some members of the village artisan classes, finding the income from their own occupations too slender, supplement it by cultivating a little land. The ryot is the poorest and hardest worked, and also the most numerous class of the masses. As is well known the ryot is nearly always in debt. Many of this class work as agricultural labourers. The wages are rising, but they are kept lower than they might be by the ever-increasing numbers of labourers. Moreover, work is available for them only in season. They are out of employment when the agricultural operations stop in the summer. They live from hand to mouth.

The rest of the 20 per cent of the village population is made up of people who are artisans,

tradesmen, those who are engaged in service (as village watchmen, etc.), those who have independent means, and lastly those who live on charity. The artisans found in villages are potters, coppersmiths, blacksmiths, goldsmiths, tailors, carders, weavers, lacemakers, bangle-makers, dyers, cobblers, etc. But with the penetration of machine-made articles into the villages, it is becoming increasingly difficult for them to keep their cottage industries going. Their daily wages are small (except those of the goldsmith, the blacksmith, and in some cases, the tailor), and they sometime supplement their income by cultivating a little land, and thus increase the pressure on the cultivated land.

The village tradesmen are grain-parchers, oil-merchants, confectioners, betel-leaf merchants, green-grocers, liquor vendors, Buniyas (general grocers), and cloth and grain merchants. Like other tradespeople, their prosperity depends upon that of their clients, which in the case of villages can be imagined from the above account.

The material condition of the people can also be understood from another point of view. In the Province, the franchise is based on a property qualification, which is very low. Still the number of voters² is only 1,598,673 which means that the percentage of the people who have sufficient means to live is only 3·4. Even allowing for the joint

² This figure is for 1926.

family system, and for those people, who, like police constables cannot vote, the percentage of people who have sufficient means to live is still very small. And at the same time it is to be remembered that a very large proportion of these voters come from towns.

Thus the ' ryot ' is very poor. He cannot afford to dispense with the labour of the child, and even the smallest cost of education, such as the cost of books, etc., is often too much for him.

B. HIS NEEDS

Such is the hard life of the ryot the backbone of the country. It is full of drudgery. Centuries of oppression have demoralised him. He endures money-lenders' extortions, Zamindar's exactions, and even sometimes the police's rigorous administration, with the same resignation with which he submits to influenza, plague or cholera. Day after day, and month after month, there is nothing in the village life to amuse or entertain him. The Zamindars, as a rule, do not think of him. In England each village has a parson, who is a centre of culture. But there is no parallel institution in India. The problem of filling up the peasant's leisure and of giving him healthy diversion is as acute as it is necessary. Not that he lacks culture, but the difficulty is caused by the lack of a sustaining and ennobling agency. The monotony of village life is broken only by a wedding in the

family, a feast, a pilgrimage or a fair. Generally, each of these ceremonies brings with it a fresh debt, and he is far too excited to enjoy it. In the opinion of Growse³ "every year half the outbreak of cholera that occurs may be traced to these ghastly merry-makings" and their root is "in the intolerable monotony of ordinary existence, which grasps at any change for a relief, but disguises the real motive by an affectation of religious or social organisation." Thus apart from his need for economic amelioration, he needs something to brighten his life.

His reverence for education is accepted on all hands. But on account of his pecuniary circumstances, he must have very strong motives to make the necessary sacrifices for the education of his child. There are four such motives which make people seek education; Tradition, the desire for knowledge, the necessity for breadwinning, and a desire to increase efficiency.

The tradition of learning is present among the literary castes like Brahmans, Kayasths, Khattris, Buniyas, etc., and in upper class Muhammadans. Apart from tradition, with most of them it is a question of bread, for their main occupation is the service of the state. These 'literary' classes form the middle class of the population, and even when they have their homes in villages, live in towns;

³ F. S. Growse, C.I.E., *Bulandshahr*, Benares, 1884.

they will get their children educated whether the State provides them with facilities or not.

The aristocracy—i.e., the men of independent means—may seek education for the sake of knowledge and culture, but it is a well-known fact that so far they have cared but little for it. A small section of the Brahmans and Moulvis⁴ seek study with altruistic motives, but it is classical and semi-religious education that they seek. The Zamindars (landholders) have now begun to get their children educated, because they find that Deputy Collectorships, Police Superintendentships, etc., enhance family prestige, and these posts cannot be obtained without education. The general diffusion of education among the middle classes is also having its effect on them. As the Zamindars have to live in villages, their education is sure to improve rural education, for if they are educated they can and may take an intelligent interest in it.

But what can be a ryot's motive for sending his child to school? The father sees no reason to deprive himself of his boy's labour, for even if the boy can learn to read and write, of what use is that to him? His sphere of interests is narrow. His relations are in the village or near by. He does not indulge in correspondence. The village has no interests which require a knowledge of the first two R's. There is no literature, cheap and suitable,

⁴ Muhammadan learned men.

which he can easily get. There are no libraries, farmers' institutes, night-schools, etc., in the village. He seldom comes into close contact with educated people, for even those who obtain a smattering of education try, and do, migrate to towns, and their visits to their homes in the village are few and far between. Vernacular papers are few, and those which do exist are, besides being too dear for him, written in a style beyond his comprehension. Light and entertaining literature, stories, topical items are generally absent from the vernacular newspapers. He will very seldom require to use his knowledge of reading. There are not even signboards in the villages. True it is that he is fond of the Ramayan and Alha ; but generally he hears them recited. The books are far too costly for him. As for the receipts of payments they are generally written in a hand which even those who are conversant with it can read but with difficulty. And even if he could read, he is too timid to pick a quarrel with the powerful Munshi (clerk) or the Zamindar. Fatalistic as he is, he generally cares but little for these receipts.

Then he asks, " will this education be an aid to efficiency in my work ? " In the present circumstances very little improvement in agricultural methods is possible ; agriculture as it is does not need any education. On the other hand, many of peasants argue that education (even in rural schools) turns a boy from field labour, and some of

them would even go so far as to argue that it leaves him economically poorer. Sometime back a barber told me that he bitterly cursed the day on which he had decided to educate his son. The boy, after failing several times in the Ninth class of a High School took service at Rs. 20 per month. As a barber he could have earned much more in his city with independence. But after this education he would not revert to the profession of his fathers. Another example was given to me by a village teacher, who said that if he had invested the money that he had spent on his education in purchasing a hackney carriage and taken to driving it, instead of teaching in a village school, economically he would have been better off. The plain fact is that the villager does not feel enough need for education to justify a sacrifice of time and money for it.

Some people think that the introduction of the Constitutional Reforms, which has resulted in enfranchising so many people, has created fresh demand for education among the masses. In this connection it is to be remembered that only a little over 3 per cent of the people are enfranchised, and the percentage of literacy is more than this. A large percentage of the voters are literate. Moreover, an election, which comes once in three years, in which sometimes people are returned unopposed, or powerful Zamindars stand, against whom it is not in anyone's interests to vote, is not likely to

make the villager yearn for education to understand the few handbills that reach the countryside on such occasions.

This is the point of view of the villager. Left to himself he has but little motive for making the necessary sacrifice of time, money and energy which is necessary for the education of his child. At the same time he is not averse from education, and so long as the child is of no economic value, he has no objection, if his purse is not pinched too much, to send his child to school, provided it is within easy reach. But as soon as the child is of help to his father in his work, he must bid goodbye to his school.

CHAPTER II

THE INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

THE part of India now known as the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh,¹ was famous in history as Hindustan. For centuries it was rich and prosperous but raiders came from the North-West, attracted by wealth and prosperity. In the 16th century the Moghuls established themselves firmly, but after their downfall, it became the cockpit of India. From the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, to the annexation of the Upper Province to the Presidency of Bengal, it suffered from chaos and anarchy, and in their struggle for existence, the people had no time to encourage education. When the British came to that Province, they found the people in appalling ignorance. But like other relics of a by-gone age, a sort of system of education (though neglected) could still be found. The object of this chapter is to examine the condition of indigenous education on the eve of the introduction of the British system of education.

Dr. F. W. Thomas has divided indigenous schools into four classes, viz., Hindu Elementary,

¹Prior to 1901 the province was known as the North-Western Provinces and Oudh.

Hindu schools of learning or Pathshalas, Muhammadan Elementary and Muhammadan schools of learning or Muktabs. Pathshala (Path+Shala= learning and place) was a general term among Hindus for elementary as well as for higher schools, just as Muktab was the name given to both kinds of Muhammadan schools—although perhaps originally these terms were restricted to those of higher types only. Reid, in his early report, has enumerated² ten types of indigenous schools classified according to the language mainly taught in them. But for our purpose only two divisions, viz., elementary and higher, with the further subdivision of Hindu and Muslim, are sufficient.

To begin with, it should be remembered that the term 'school' did not a century back denote the same thing in India that it does to-day. In those days the school consisted almost invariably of a single teacher and from at least a couple to a dozen or a score of children, who met at any place regularly for the purpose of learning something. There were no classes, and generally no furniture beyond perhaps a mat. A handy wooden plank varnished green with fresh grass, and a pen made from a reed growing on the hedge of a field, and ink made from a kind of chalk constituted the whole apparatus. They did not indulge in the luxury of books.

² H. S. Reid, '*Report on Indigenous Education and Vernacular Schools.*' Agra, 1852. p. 12.

In the report of the London International Exhibition of 1871, Dr. Smith describes the model of an Indian village school as follows³: "Against the long and costly array of school furniture in the European portion of the Educational Exhibition, and that in the South Kensington Museum, we have to see what?—a mat to illustrate the cheap and portable set used by pupils in indigenous schools, price one penny, made of palmyra palm leaves by the boys themselves." The meeting place, or to give it a more dignified name, the school building, was equally humble. Sometimes it was the teacher's own mud hut, at others the headman's or chief villager's verandah, or the open 'chabutra' of a Mahajan's house, and, if the children were very lucky, they assembled in the 'dalan' or court-yard of some public building like a temple, mosque or Thana. Failing everything else, they met under a shady tree.

There is reason to believe that before the successive regimes of *Muhammadan* rulers there was, what Long calls,⁴ "the old municipal system of the Hindus," under which "each village had its chief, its accountant, its priest, smith, carpenter, potter, barber, washerman, poet, doctor, and master called

³ Dr. George Smith: *Report on Educational Works and Appliances* (London International Exhibition, 1871), p. 15.

⁴ Adam's *Report on Vernacular Education in Bengal*—
 Edited by S. Long. Edition, 1868, p. 9.

a Guru Mahashey. This village system weathered various political storms, and, as Metcalfe wrote ; ' Hindu, Pathan, Moghul, Mahratta, Sikh, English are all masters in turn, but the village community remains the same.' Yet even this changeless and unchangeable village community could not but be affected by the apathy of its Muhammadan rulers for its cultural welfare. The chaos which followed this long spell of apathy and which made safety of life and property uncertain, compelled the village community to limit their attention to what was absolutely necessary for the bare preservation of the society, and so there is no wonder that in those strenuous days it was neglected. Dr. Leitner, in his monograph on the Indigenous Education of the Punjab, has attempted to prove that in the Punjab at any rate, the village school was the relic of the old village system. Be it as it may, in the North-Western Provinces, it was only a relic. The guru, during the period following the disruption of the Moghul Empire, was the most neglected of the village functionaries. He was either a ' superannuated ' old Kayasth, or an out-of-employment Brahman, who, perhaps for reasons of caste, could not find a better job. The pay of these teachers was also very low. When the harvest was cut and deposited in granaries, the schoolmaster was given from one *adhaiya* (2½ seers) to two *paseris* (10 seers) of grain. The Hindu boys paid him from one *adhela* (half-farthing) to two pice (half-penny) on each *ekadashi*

(eleventh day of each fortnight). Besides these payments, he was given presents on various festivals which generally took the form of money, clothes, sweetmeats, or fruits. He was also given presents when the boy joined or left the school or when he was married. If the teacher happened to be a Brahman, he would also receive 'sidha' (raw food) on various festivals. In some schools, the mode of payment was a sort of contract. The teacher was paid two annas for every *patti*⁵ that the child learnt and recited to his parents. But in spite of the multiplicity of gifts, presents and fees the average monthly income of a village teacher in the North-Western Provinces in 1850, was only Rs. 4. Some of the villagers had what were called the 'domestic tutors.' A well-to-do person would engage a teacher to instruct his children. It was a point of respectability for him to do so. The pernicious custom of private tuition in the United Provinces is a relic of that old 'domestic tutor' mentality among the respectable classes, which has persisted not only because of defects in our system of education but also because of the aforesaid tradition. The domestic tutor was generally employed by the Muhammadan well-to-do people, for he could dine at his master's house. He was generally much better off than his colleague in the village, for not only did he receive a better

⁵ *Patti* (literally, a writing board) meant a lesson.

salary and food, and warm clothing in winter, but he was also allowed to coach the children of his master's neighbours, friends and relations, for which they paid him in cash. There were some teachers who gave gratuitous instruction, but in elementary schools their number was negligible.

The profession which offered an average pay less than that of a grasscutter, even in those days, could not attract well-educated people. Moreover, the parents in the villages were themselves ignorant and could be easily imposed upon by people, who had a smattering of anything. The villager did not want his child to become a *Pandit* unless he was one himself, or unless he was unusually ambitious. Those who wanted their sons to become *Pandits*, sent them to a Sanskrit *Pathshala* or a *Mukṭab*, and if they were well-to-do employed a teacher in their homes. The average villager, if he could afford it, would send his child to school to learn a little arithmetic and alphabets. But even this apparently modest instruction had to be imparted without any apparatus. In spite of their incompetence, the teachers did pretty well in the circumstances. Reid remarks that the Hindi schoolmaster "is often unable to read. He uses no book, but teaches only the Multiplication Table by word of mouth. Many who can read perform the operation only by the aid of spelling through all but monosyllables. Kāyasth teachers can seldom read Nagari, and many Brāhmans

are in the same predicament."⁶ And again "every one who has examined village schools must have been surprised at the astonishingly small amount of knowledge of any kind, communicated by the teacher to his scholars."⁷ But it has to be remembered that for the emoluments offered, nothing better could be obtained. The success or failure of a school, however, must not be judged only by the amount of knowledge imparted to children, but it had also to be considered whether the value of moral influence and discipline was beneficial. We shall consider this point later.

We shall now examine the courses of instruction followed in the village elementary schools. Most of the village schools were Hindi or Mahajani or Kaithi schools, i.e., the script taught was either Nagari (in which Sanskrit is written), or one of its corrupt forms, viz., Mahajani or Kaithi. The first script was, and is still employed by the Mahajans or bankers, while Kaithi derived its name from Kayasths, who, being of the writer class, wrote a running and illegible hand. The difference however was not only one of script, but of the material of instruction also. The Nagari, or Hindi schools were generally concerned with a sort of general

⁶ H. S. Reid: B.C.S., *Report on Indigenous Education and Vernacular Schools*. Agra 1852, p. 17.

⁷ *Ibid*, p. 18.

education, while the Mahajani and Kaithi schools specialised in commercial and agricultural accounts respectively. Their course generally comprised reading, writing, and mental and written arithmetic. The amount of each of these depended partly upon the ability of the teacher, partly on the inclination of the parents and partly on the period for which the pupils stayed in the school, which in its turn depended upon a number of social and economical factors. But the schools had to adapt themselves to the surroundings, and like a stream which does not rise higher than its source, they could not go beyond the demand for education in the community. As we have already seen, those who wanted 'higher education' sent their boys to higher schools, and thus the elementary schools were attended only by the children of those people, who wanted just the rudiments of the three R's. Thus the object of the village elementary schools was to give the power of communicating and interpreting the commonest ideas, worded in the usual colloquial language, and also to teach enough arithmetic to suffice for the practical needs of a simple and secluded community. Of course, where, pupils such as the sons of Mahajans or Kayasths needed a higher and detailed study of a subject they obtained as much as they could in the schools, and the finishing touches were given by serving for a period of apprenticeship in some shop or firm where they obtained practical training.

The child was taught to write before he was taught to read. First the vowels were taught, the child being made to repeat the sounds as he wrote them. Similar lessons were given on the consonants which were divided into groups according to the organ of speech mainly used in pronouncing them and adding after them the name of that organ, e.g.—

pa, pha, ba, bha, ma—iti oshtam

the main organ used in pronouncing *pa, pha, ba, bha, ma*, being the lip, *iti oshtam*. But in Hindi schools their order was learnt by means of alphabetical poems—known as *barakharis*. These were of many kinds. Some dealt with stories of great men, while others consisted of moral precepts. The *Sudama Barahktu* described the story of Sudama, and each couplet of the story began with a letter of the alphabet. Similarly the *barakhari* of moral precepts also began with those letters. For example :—

ददा दोष न दीजे काहू
दोस कर्म अपने ही

D—Do not blame others ;
you have to blame
your own action.

जजा जपे सोइ गति पावे

J—(Whosoever) prays gets
salvation.

ससा साधु संग पावे जन कोइ

S—Sadhu's (saint's) com-
pany is obtained by
but few.

The Hindus had a number of *barakharis* and the children loved to commit them to memory.

After they had mastered the alphabet, the pupils were examined. The teacher would write a few letters at haphazard on the board of the child, and the child had to recognise them ; or the teacher would make a small hole in a piece of paper showing just one letter, and he would then move it up and down a book, and the boy had to recognise the letter which showed through the hole. The teachers were sometimes overstrict in such examinations, and did not realise that the constant use of these letters would fix them in children's minds. However, once the child had satisfied his teacher, he was turned upon *barākharis*.

Barākhari is a corrupt form of *dwadashakshari* (twelve letters). There are twelve vowels in the Devanagari alphabet, viz., a, ā, i, ī, u, ū, e, ai, o, au, ang, ah. The combination of these twelve vowels with a consonant comprised one *barākhari*, e.g.—
 ka kā ki kī ku kū ke kai ko kau kang kah
 क का कि की कु कू के कै को कौ कं कः

A similar *barākhari* was formed with the remaining 32 consonants, and thus after mastering *barākharis*, the phonetic nature of Hindi writing enabled him to write almost anything he spoke. Thus although *barākharis* took a whole month to master, once it was mastered, the boy could read or write ordinary things without much difficulty of spelling.

The compound letters were next learnt but there was no fixed method for teaching them. Generally

the teacher wrote out what was known as *siddho ki patti* and the child copied it. This *patti* took its name from the first word of the beginning of the Kalap Vyakaran (a Sanskrit grammar), which contains words with all sorts of compound letters. This was also a relic of those days when even the humblest village school taught some Sanskrit grammar, without which no one could lay claim to any pretension of education. The *siddho ki patti* consisted of four or five pages and gave a good practice of writing difficult words, the meaning of which the child could not understand. At this stage he was given practice in writing proper names. He wrote his own name, the names of his parents, friends and relatives, as well as those of days, months, seasons, towns, etc. This was a very interesting part of his work. After this he was given practice in letter-writing, which consisted mainly in the proper form of address to people of different grades.

Very few children could stay in school beyond this stage, but if they did, and if the teacher was competent, they would bring any book they had in their house, generally the *Ramayan*. But in the days,⁸ before printed books were used, this was only in very exceptional cases.

⁸ Printing was introduced into India at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries.

One of the objects of ordinary schools was to give a working knowledge of arithmetic, and for this reason it was made as practical as possible. Mental arithmetic was encouraged and short rules or formulæ (called *gur*) were committed to memory. The method of teaching arithmetic in ordinary schools resembled the teaching of language. The children began with *ginti* or numeration. The numbers 1 to 100 were divided into ten equal parts, and one part was taken at a time. Their order was learnt mechanically in the course of chorus recital at the close of the school, but when it came to writing, the teacher would write with a child's hand in his hand, the first part in a perpendicular column, after the fashion of writing Chinese. The child was made to 'say' the number as he wrote it. Then he was required to copy out the *eḱa* (i.e., first column from 1 to 10) a whole *pattiful* or more till he passed a test. The test consisted in asking the child to write out quickly any number given at haphazard, as 9, 6, 8, 3, etc. After this, the *gyara*, *iḱisa*, *iḱtisa*, *iḱtalisa*, etc., up to 100 were learnt. In some schools the reverse order was also learnt at the chorus time or separately, and I could in my school days read the numbers from 100 to 1 (i.e., in reverse order) I think within a minute. I had also learnt to repeat mechanically alternate odd and even numbers, e.g., 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13 to 99, and 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 to 100.

After numeration, the boys began multiplication tables or *paharas*. The boy had, indeed from

his first day in school, been made to stand in a line of scholars just before dismissal, when following a leading voice, the multiplication tables were recited. The table was thus mechanically fixed in his mind before he began arithmetic. The tables were of several varieties. To begin with, the boys had to learn how to write the *paharas* of from 1 to 40 ; i.e., each number from 1 to 40 was multiplied by the numbers 1 to 10, each arranged in a perpendicular column and learnt. Most schools attempted these multiplication tables up to 40. There were some (though very few) who would make some of their boys learn them up to 100, while there were others (again a minority) who were satisfied with teaching the *paharas* up to 20 or 25. Each *pahara* was fully tested and when a set of ten was finished another test was given. The test was generally oral. The teacher would ask, "How many times 16 is 80?", "How many 13's are there in 91?", etc. My *guru* claimed that to know the *paharas* well, each student should be able to answer any question on them in his sleep. After the *paharas* of whole numbers, the *paharas* of fractions were learnt. But the multipliers in these cases were from 1 to 100. The fractions taken were $\frac{1}{4}$ (*pao* or *paua*), $\frac{3}{4}$ (*pauna*), $1\frac{1}{4}$ (*savaiya*), $1\frac{1}{2}$ (*deorha*), $2\frac{1}{2}$ (*dhaiya* or *arhaiya*), $3\frac{1}{2}$ (*huntha*) and $4\frac{1}{2}$ (*dheoncha*).

We can well imagine the strain which was felt by children in learning by heart these cumbrous

tables, which had to be learnt well, as the teachers were unsparing in their tests. But, as a matter of fact, the strain was not so great as is generally imagined, for the chorus singing of the multiplication tables mechanically fixed the tables in the children's minds. These choruses had a peculiar rhythm and swing, and perhaps for this reason and by reason of the child's natural love of repetition they were very well learnt.

Before the advanced *paharas* were taken, the children were given practice in the first four rules of arithmetic. The teacher would write a number of sums on their *pattis* and they would come to him when they had finished their sums. The teacher would look at them, punish them if they were wrong, and would give them another *pattiful* of sums if they were right.

The children were then taught the tables of money, weights and linear measurements, and the use of *anḱas*, i.e., the methods of writing them in figures.

It was now that the *gurs* were explained and learnt. They were so to speak handy and convenient 'foot rules' for quick calculations and were of many kinds, e.g., for calculating prices, measurements, discount, interest, etc. Here are a very simple rule and an example for calculating the price of a *chhatak*:—

The price of a *chhatak* is as many annas as the number of rupees for a *seer*:

e.g., if the price of a seer is Rs. 10, the price of a *chhatak* is 10 annas.

In most village schools simple mensuration was taught. It consisted of the methods of measuring fields of different shapes, calculation of their areas, etc. Sons of *patwaris*, and perhaps of the zamindars also, learnt village accounts, viz., *patwari's* papers, etc., but generally these things were not taught in the school because the *patwaris* treated them as 'trade secrets' and instructed their sons in their 'craft' (its accounts as well as its intricacies) at home.

In the schools where there were a good number of sons of commercial classes, the Indian system of book-keeping and commercial arithmetic (calculating prices, interest, compound interest, profit and loss, etc.) were also taught. Attention was also given to writing *hundis* (bills of exchange) of different kinds and of commercial correspondence.

Urdu and Persian schools.—These were not so numerous in rural areas as the Hindi schools, but as Persian was the court language of the Moghuls and their Nawabs, and even of the British Government till 1835, Persian education was looked upon as a means of livelihood, as English education is regarded today. Thus the object of these schools was to qualify scholars to transact the ordinary business of everyday life. Further, those who had to move in 'higher' and 'polished' society, were trained in etiquette, which was a speciality of these

schools. For these reasons, the Persian schools were patronised even in villages and were frequented by the Hindus also, specially Kayasths, who often outnumbered the Muhammadan students. But when Persian ceased to be the court language, it lost its monetary value. The students soon found that Persian was no more a royal road to Government service and the rhyme woefully said :—

पढ़े फ़ारसी बेचें तेल

यह देखो कुदरत का खेल .

“ Behold the vagaries of Fate, he is educated in Persian and still sells oil ! ”

Thus the Persian schools received a shock which ultimately destroyed them. But in the period of pre-British education they remained fairly strong. Urdu and Persian were taught in the same school. In fact the preliminary course of a Persian school consisted in teaching alphabets which are common to both, and as Dr. F. W. Thomas puts it, “ the higher schools were often nothing but the upper parts of elementary schools.”⁹

The method of teaching in these schools closely resembled that in Hindi schools. The child, who began his schooling at the age of about seven, traced the alphabets which were written on his

⁹ F. W. Thomas, *The History and Prospects of British Education in India*, Cambridge, 1891, page 10.

*takhti*¹⁰ by the teacher, and repeated them till he could recognise them. This method, which I may term the 'look, say and do' method, continued till he began reading.

After mastering the alphabets, the child proceeded to learn the diacritical marks, i.e., the use of the *zaber*, *zer*, *pesh* and *tauwin*.

Urdu spelling is more difficult than Hindi spelling because it has several letters for one sound, e.g., *swad*, *se* and *seen* give the sound of 's'. For this reason, the teacher had to give sufficient attention to spelling. The rudiments of spelling and of the joining of single letters were taught. It should be remembered that writing and reading proceeded together.

In fact the Urdu education finished here, and that of Persian began. The first book which was almost invariably taken was the *Khaliqbari*. This is a short dictionary of Arabic, Persian and Hindi in verse. It takes its name from the first word of the opening rhyme

Khaliqbari surjanher

Wahid ek bida kartar

The next book to be taken (not always) was *Karima*, which again is known popularly by the first word of the opening verse, although its name is *Pandnama* by Saadi. It is a collection of moral precepts.

¹⁰ *Takhti* is the same as *patti*. It is a small wood board used by children for writing.

These books were generally committed to memory and in the first reading the meaning was generally not explained. To ensure correct spelling, each word was spelt as it was read. The next books learnt usually were the *Mahmudnama*, *Mamkīman*, *Gulistan* and *Bostan*. By the time the boy reached this stage, the meaning of the text was explained to him literally, word for word. Idiomatic rendering was very rare, if ever attempted. The idea was to understand every word of the text, and as ultimately it was Persian and not Urdu which was to be used, no great attention was given to idiomatic Urdu. As Persian was the court language, letter-writing was an important part of the curriculum. Collections of letters like the *Insha Madhoham* or Abul Fazal's letters were read. Usually some Persian poems also, generally love poems, were studied. But they were, to say the least, very inappropriate for boys. At this stage, dictation was introduced and *khushkhat* or 'penmanship' was a regular part of their school work. Those boys who could afford to stay further read the *Sikandarnama* (verse) and *Bahar-i-Danish* (prose). Then these books are almost unequalled in Persian literature for their style and chastity of language.

The whole course took from seven to nine years, and by the time he left school, the boy had a very fair knowledge of Persian literature; he could translate from and into Persian; he could write

different kinds of letters (letter-writing being the most important kind of composition), and he could write a very good hand.

But at the same time it will be noticed that in these schools, practical though they were meant to be, arithmetic was conspicuous by its absence. The Kayasths taught it to their children at home, but Muhammadans were generally deficient in it. Grammar also was neglected.

Higher schools.—It is beyond the scope of this book to deal at any length with higher types of indigenous schools, although they frequently appeared in the rural areas and leavened the country-side by their influence, which was mainly cultural. The Muhammadan higher schools were those which taught Arabic, and their course comprised grammar, rhetoric, law, religion and medicine. There were also what were known as Quran schools, which were held generally in mosques, where children were taught to recite the Quran by rote. The Sanskrit schools were more numerous and their influence on the Hindu society was distinct. They were more permanent, as teaching was generally a family affair and it was mostly gratuitous. The course was very wide in range and comprised philosophy, logic, mathematics, astronomy, grammar, rhetoric, epics, literature, astrology, medicine, law and the *Puranas*. In these schools, Hindi and elementary arithmetic were not taught. Although their instruction touched but few in the rural areas,

their influence on the life, thought and customs of the people was very patent. This aspect of these schools will be examined in the proper place.

The scholars.—We now turn our attention to the scholars. It is very difficult at this stage to find out accurately the number and percentage of boys from different communities in different types of indigenous schools in the pre-British period. But we can get an idea of the educational conditions by examining Mr. Reid's¹¹ figures of the eight experimental districts in 1852. Of 26,833 pupils (all boys) 5,491 were Muhammadans. The number of Hindu boys according to their caste was : Brahmans, 6,614 ; Kayasths, 4,650 ; Banias, 3,958 ; Rajputs, 1,821 ; miscellaneous castes, 4,299. The first three being literary classes together contributed almost three-quarters of the total number of Hindu pupils. The Rajputs, being mostly landholders, were not very prominent. It is interesting to note that Muhammadans were proportionately more numerous than their proportion in the population. Their percentage in the population is about 16 (it has not materially changed) but their scholars formed over 20 per cent of the total. Although the details of the sub-castes of the Muhammadans are not given, it is safe to assume that most of them came from the literary and better classes. From the above

¹¹ H. S. Reid, *Report on Indigenous Education and Vernacular Schools*, Agra, 1852. p. 26.

figures, it is evident that education was limited to certain castes and classes only.

The extent of literacy.—The above figures are not very large, and even if we allow for all difficulties in collecting statistics and for the home instruction, we are not warranted in assuming that literacy was very widespread. According to Mr. Thomason's investigations, less than 5 per cent of the children of school-going age were in schools.¹² The condition of literacy in rural areas is lucidly described in the preface of the *Bohron ki Pustak* (in Hindi), published in 1850.¹³

“ Both Bohras and Kisans (moneylenders and peasants) are illiterate. In many villages Bohras are so uneducated that they cannot even write the accounts of their clients in their books in proper form ; and so far as the Zamindars are concerned, almost all of them are quite illiterate. Now, it is natural that in these circumstances misunderstanding should arise between them. There are many *sahukars* (moneylenders) who never write anything, but depend wholly upon their memories. There are others who, though they cannot write themselves, get their account written by *Patwaris* or others, while there are also those who do write their accounts but in a very haphazard and inaccurate way only to

¹² *Vide* p. 65.

¹³ *Bohron ki Pustak* (Hindi), Agra, 1850, p. 4 (translated).

satisfy or deceive their consciences. When this is the condition of the Bohras whose sole business depends upon book-keeping, there is no wonder that the peasantry is illiterate. It is much to be regretted that in their childhood, through laziness and stupidity, they neglect their studies and consequently remain ignorant all through their lives and have to depend even for trifling things on others."

This description, which applies to a particular class of people in a particular area (the country round about Agra), seems to be coloured with the zeal of an author who is over-anxious to emphasize the usefulness of his book. That the villagers, especially of the upper castes or of the middle class, did get some education even during the chaotic period following the disruption of the Moghul empire, could be proved by the writings of the contemporary writers. Major Broughton writes as follows:¹⁴

"There is perhaps no set of men in India, better qualified to afford the kind of information I sought for, than the *sipahis* of our own army. They include every class of Hindus, though by far the greater proportion belongs to Brahmans and Rajputs.¹⁵ They are commonly the sons of

¹⁴ John Duer Broughton, *Selections from the Popular Poetry of the Hindus*, London, John Martin. 1814, page 6.

¹⁵ Major Broughton's regiment was at the time stationed at Gwalior and the men were recruited mostly from the western districts of U.P. and from Oudh.

respectable farmers, from every province of Hindustan, and often have received tolerably good education before they quit their homes. The Brahmans especially are generally well-versed in the common principles and ceremonies of their religion and the historical legends connected with it ; and not seldom have attained to the degree of Par.dit, when they enlist as soldiers in the Company's army. They soon lose many of their earlier prejudices ; become inquisitive respecting the manners and customs of the country of their officers, and are always willing to repay any information on such subjects by communicating in return all that they know of their own. It was precisely from such a man that I obtained the greater part of the poems contained in this volume. I had remarked that talking upon any subject, he frequently quoted the verses of some favourite poet ; and one day, when he had done so with peculiar emphasis, and had afterwards expatiated with evident delight upon their merit, I desired him to write them¹⁶ down and explain them to me. . . . I thought I perceived so much simplicity and delicacy in the ideas, and such neatness in the points they contained, that I expressed a wish for further information

¹⁶ They were *dohas* (couplets) from the famous *Satsai* of Bihari.

respecting the dialect in which they were written, and that he would make a collection for me of similar compositions. My new studies soon became known and many individuals of the same rank in life contributed to increase my store by voluntary offers of all information they possessed on the subject ; evincing at the same time such evident symptom of gratified pride at the distinction conferred upon their rustic lore, as led me to follow up my pursuit with increased satisfaction."

Mr. Cunningham is quoted as follows in the *Report on Indian Education of 1852*:¹⁷

" In India there is no want of a desire to obtain knowledge. An acquaintance with reading, writing and arithmetic is necessary to the business of life in a country almost as civilised perhaps as Spain or Greece and literary and scientific acquirements likewise give honours among Hindus and Muhammadans as well as Europeans. The Kayasthas of Central India and the Gangetic Provinces, the Khatris of the Panjab and the Brahmins of Kashmir, Bengal and the Deccan, all regularly instruct their children in order that they may obtain a livelihood as copyists or as clerks in public and

¹⁷ *Report on Education*, Calcutta, 1852, Appendix XI. page 236.

private establishments, or in the case of Brahmins as family priests and astrologers as well as writers and petty officials. The Bohras and Baniyas sedulously render their children quick accountants, and if needs be skilful book-keepers. The poorest Muhammadans are desirous that their sons should once at least read the Koran, and although the language is not comprehended, the alphabet is equally the key of much used Persian. Boys are preferentially entered in English schools if there is a prospect of getting them employment as writers, for the pay in the English departments of the offices is commonly better than in the vernacular sections. To give instruction in reading the Koran, or in Persian language, or in the ordinary vernacular dialects, or in the mercantile varieties of these tongues, there will thus be found one or more schools, not only in cities but in every town and large village, in which the teachers receive fees of four annas or so a month, or in which they are occasionally paid in kind, as in grain or in fuel or in service, as by supplying water or making and mending clothes. The estimation in which a *mulla* or *pandit* is held is notorious, the extent to which a Muhammadan gentleman is familiar with Arabic Law and Persian Poetry is equally well-known. A Hindu of any acquirements is immediately greeted with the honorary title of

‘*Shastri*,’ ‘*Siddhanti*,’ etc., and among the better classes of either creed the saying is common, that the knowledge is the *taghma* of *sharāfat* or indeed *insaniat*, the symbol of gentility, or even of humanity.”

These two extracts from the two contemporary writers show that the people of the upper classes even in the rural areas in those days did receive some sort of education. Much of the instruction, it appears, was given at home either by ‘domestic tutors’ or by the guardians themselves. So far as the middle or literary classes were concerned they were, on the whole, receiving the kind of education which was in fashion at the time. But the bulk of the villagers, especially of the lower castes, were illiterate.

The reason of this state of affairs, in spite of the number of schools and the custom of sending children to schools, was the apathy of the people. Custom demanded that they should send their children to school. The occasion provided them with some excitement in their monotonous lives and so they sent their children to school. But admission to school did not always mean continuing at school for any length of time. Mr. Reid’s opinion was that the average school-life of a school-going child was a year and a half only. But even this period is misleading, for in addition to regular holidays (about seven days a month), there were frequent and sometimes serious interruptions. Raja Siva Prasad,

C.S.I. (the mutiny veteran and the first Indian inspector of schools in our province) in his evidence before the Commission of 1882 gave several concrete examples of the poverty of the people and added¹⁸ : "Men must be fed first and then instructed. It is poverty which keeps back the people from many things which are good and desirable. Little boys keep off birds from the fields, pick up cow-dung for fuel, take out cattle for grazing and watering, bring grass for fodder, and in fact help their parents in many ways in their rural life. They cannot spare the services of their children ; those who can afford it are very willing, or rather anxious, to send their boys to any school which may be accessible." This statement, coming from a moderate and experienced person like the Raja, fairly represents the true state of affairs. It must be added, however, that the parents not only felt the immediate loss of the children's services, but had no tangible fruit to which to look forward from their education. Consequently even those who sent their children would sacrifice their education if it interfered with the immediate help and services they obtained from them ; and it was sooner or later bound to happen. The boys in Hindi schools entered between the ages of seven and nine, and left it within a couple of years.

¹⁸ Appendix to *Education Commission Report* (1882) ; Report by the North-Western Provinces and Oudh Provincial Committee, Calcutta, 1884, page 314.

This state of affairs had a very injurious effect on schools. During their long absence or holidays the children forgot most of that which they had learnt in school, and the same ground was covered again, to be forgotten once more. The schools suffered not only in efficiency, but their very existence was precarious. There was no continuity. Every year the schools were formed anew and so long as there were enough children in the literary families of the village to pay for their education, the teacher stayed in the village, and reopened or restarted the school every year. But when the demand decreased, he moved to a neighbouring village. Thus many of the elementary schools were of an ephemeral character. The higher schools, where teaching was a family property and was given gratis, did not undergo so many vicissitudes. Those schools also where the teacher was 'a domestic tutor,' were more stable.

The presence of the higher schools had often disastrous consequences for the poor elementary school teacher. To begin with they were of higher type, and the elementary school lost in prestige in comparison. Secondly, they generally gave instruction free, which attracted most of the school-going boys, leaving but few for the elementary school where they had to pay for an inferior education. Thirdly, the teachers who did not 'sell' learning were respected, and conversely those who 'sold' it were regarded as mercenaries—not deserving of

much respect. But as the country was poor, the demand for education was small, and the remuneration of teachers petty. Hence, the class who entered the profession were often not of a type to inspire respect or confidence in the people.

Life in indigenous schools.—The indigenous schools have generally been described from without. So far as I know, they have not been described from within. As I was educated in indigenous schools of three types and had a Maulvi to teach me at home, I know them from within, but I must add that the elementary schools in which I was educated have since then disappeared.

About a quarter of a mile from my home was a small temple with a verandah with delicate pillars and fine Moghul arches. One Pandit Motilal Bhatt held a *pathshala* in that verandah. There were hardly twenty children in that school. It was a Hindi school. I do not remember much of the Pandit, but I do remember that I learnt to read and write Hindi in that school. The main work there was writing the *barakhari* on *patti* with a solution of chalk, using a reed pen. My proudest day in this school was when I was asked by the Pandit to write proper names. I was also allowed to read from a lithographed primer. This was the highest achievement a pupil could attain in that school.

The discipline of the Pandit was fairly severe. Although the school was situated at a *tiraha* (junction of three roads), we had to forget about its situation,

for the slightest inattention or slackness in work was at once detected by the "spectacled Pandit." He always carried a cane in his hand, but like the sword of Damocles, it only hung over us. It was very seldom used. His stern looks and authoritative voice were generally sufficient to keep us little urchins in order.

The Pandit was a Brahman, and so once in a fortnight, I used to take a *sidha*¹⁹ for him. This was in addition to the fees which were paid to him direct by my uncle or grandfather. I do not know the amount, but it could not have been more than a few annas.

The school had its bright side also. At the close of the school we were ordered to stand in a line and were made to repeat the multiplication table before we were allowed to go home. The pent up energy of two or three hours found vent in shouting at the tops of our voices. It was purely a mechanical affair for those who were repeating. Of course, the one whose turn it was to lead had to keep fairly awake, for any mistake was promptly punished.

Shortly after finishing at the Pandit's school, I was sent to my father at Allahabad. Here I was

¹⁹ *Sidha* consists of raw food materials. A *sidha* would generally have a seer (2 lb) of flour, half a seer of rice, quarter seer of pulse, ghee, salt, spices and some vegetables. As a Brahman would not take meals at everybody's house, he was given raw materials to cook his meal at his own place.

sent to a *mahajani pathshala*, in which Indian book-keeping, arithmetic and *mahajani* (banker's) script were taught. The school was situated in the Mahajani Tola (bankers' quarter) in the heart of the city. A *mahajan* had allowed the use of his *dalan* and *chabutra* for the purpose. It was run by a *guru*. The number of boys was over fifty, and so two sons of the *guru* (the younger was hardly sixteen) were helping him. We had two periods a day in the school, from eight to eleven in the morning and two or three to five in the afternoon. In a big city, small children could not be expected to go alone to the school. The elder son of the *guru*, therefore, collected them and brought them back from the school. But he went to the houses of those children only who were respectable and consequently paid handsomely, i.e., eight annas a month or more. The school contained boys of all ages, castes and classes.

When we reached school, we opened it. The furniture, which consisted of half-torn mats, were taken from a small room, dusted and spread on the floor, after we had swept it. The *pattis* were also stored there. Each one of us washed his *patti* and polished it with the aid of a *ghouta* (thick bottom of a round bottle). Then we started with our work. There were groups, but each boy more or less went at his own speed. The lessons consisted of writing and committing to memory tables, *gurs* (formulæ), etc., and we were made to practise good hand-

writing. Carelessness or slovenliness was not tolerated, and a very stern discipline, backed by severe punishments, exacted a standard which is now hardly attained in our present-day schools. When the hand of a boy was set on the *patti*²⁰ (wood board), he was allowed to write on *thali* (brass plate) or directly on paper. The *guru* had collected a large number of old *bahis* or account-books from the *mahajans*, and we were asked to copy them. We were also taught to write business letters, bills of exchange (*hundis*), etc., in *mahajani*. Letter-writing was considered an art, for one had to be very particular of etiquette in addressing different grades of people. We were also taught to write letters in Hindi. By the time the student finished his course in the school, he was a good *munim* (clerk), and had no difficulty in getting an apprenticeship in some Indian firm. The *guru* was in constant touch with many of the bankers, for many of them were his own pupils, and so were many of their *munims* (senior clerks). Thus his recommendation was valuable. Besides this he was a well-known *guru*, and a training under him was a recommendation in itself.

Here the *guru* was paid mostly in cash. Occasionally my grandmother gave him some presents, but they were wholly voluntary. The

²⁰ *Patti* is a small wood board on which school-children write their lessons with chalk.

rich pupils presented the *guru* with a *jarawal*, or suit for winter. On the *Guru Puja* day, however, boys came to 'worship' the *guru*. We would not take any breakfast that day till we had 'worshipped' him. The old as well as the present pupils of the *guru* came with presents according to their means, the well-established bankers with costly cloths, sweets, vessels, cash, the poor boys with a few fruits and *batashas*.²¹ But every one brought a garland of flowers. He would go, bow to the *guru* and touch his feet, put a red or yellow sandalwood paste mark on his forehead, put the garland round his neck, and then present his gift. The *guru* in his turn put a similar mark on the pupil's forehead and gave him some sweets or fruits in return as his gifts. In Sanskrit *pathshalas*, the ceremony was more dignified, as it was accompanied by regular rituals and the chanting of hymns. It took the nature of a religious function. This was the *guru's* day. For the boys, however, the merriest day in the *mahajani pathshala* was the *Nag Panchami*. They were dressed in their best clothes that day, and would play on *dundas*²² to the tune of a fife and drum. Playing with *dundas* very much resembled the sword-dance I saw in a village school in Oxfordshire. The whole school formed a party, and, singing and playing, they visited the house of

²¹ A kind of cheap sweetmeat.

²² Rods.

each boy and pasted a gaudy picture (representing some scene from the life of Krishna or some other Hindu deity) over his door. The party thus made a round of the town and in the evening they assembled together in the bazar where there was a great competition of *dūnda* play with the parties from other schools.

But I was not intended for *munimship* and my object in joining that school was to improve my arithmetic. I had almost finished my course in *guruji's pathshala* when I was taken out and admitted to a Sanskrit *pathshala*.

The number of students here was about forty, and sometimes even more. No fees were charged. Most of the boys were poor and so they were given free board and lodging. In this *pathshala* I began to commit to memory the great Sanskrit dictionary in verse, viz., *Amarkosh*, and the concise Sanskrit grammar—*Laghu Kaumudi*. It was mostly memory work. Certain things were explained to me, but I could not understand them then. The work seemed too hard for me, and before I could gain any substantial knowledge from the education in the *pathshala*, the more attractive English schools had caught my fancy. I was also taught to recite in proper accents a few chapters from the Vedas.

But there were other things besides regular lessons and courses. The Pandit, who was a veritable mine of old Sanskrit stories, amused and instructed us with them. The Pandit would illustrate his

teaching with these stories. The *pathshala*, almost unconsciously, formed the ideals and outlook of the life of the pupils. We learnt a great many small hymns. One of them was the well-known *Prashnotari* or catechism of Shankaracharya. I give a few couplets to show the kinds of ideas it inculcated in a body of students who owing to the traditional reverence shown to the *guru*, took almost anything coming from him as the highest truth. And in this case particularly so, because the original piece was by no less a person than Shri Shankaracharya himself.

अपारसंसारसमुद्रमध्ये संमज्जतोमेशरणं किमस्ति ।

गुरोः कृपालोः कृपया वदैतद्विश्वेशपादांबुजदीर्घनौका ॥

- ‘ I lie helpless on this wide ocean of the world,
O kind *guru*, do tell me how can I cross it? ’
- ‘ Thou shalt cross it only through the help of
the lotus feet of the Lord. ’
- ‘ Which are poisons? ’
- ‘ All passions. ’
- ‘ Who are eternally unhappy? ’
- ‘ Those who indulge in luxuries. ’
- ‘ Who are to be praised? ’
- ‘ Those who do good to others. ’
- ‘ Who are worthy of worship? ’
- ‘ Those who can see the reality of things. ’
- ‘ Who is poor? ’
- ‘ He who has great ambitions. ’
- ‘ Who is rich? ’
- ‘ He who has contentment. ’

- 'Who is dead although living?'
- 'He who is without occupation.'
- 'Which things ever elude till death?'
- 'False hopes.'
- 'Which things are as fleet as lightning?'
- 'Wealth, youth and age.'
- 'Which is the best gift?'
- 'That which is given to a deserving person.'
- 'What ought a man to do even unto death?'
- 'He should follow the path of *dharma*.'

Another small book which was popular in these schools was *Chanakya Niti*. It also had a wonderful hold on boys' imagination at the time. This was partly due to the fact that the language of the original is so simple, chaste and dignified. The same may be said of the *Prashnottari* cited above. Here are a couple of verses from the *Chanakya Niti*:—

"His parents are his enemies, who was not given education (by them), for in the assembly of learned people he looks like a goose in the company of swans."

"Jewels are not found in every mountain; pearls are not found in every elephant; neither are sandalwood trees found in every jungle nor real saints in every place."

Occasionally the senior students had *shastrarthas*, or discussions on some point connected with their studies. They were invariably in Sanskrit. As there were no examinations, honour in these

discussions was a great distinction. The great local scholars attended these discussions, and a promising student always attracted their notice. It was in these discussions that when a scholar did exceptionally well, he was hailed by the Pandits present with some title, e.g., 'Nyayaratna' (jewel among logicians), 'Vedantkēsari' (lion among Vedantists), etc. But such distinction could be obtained only by real and exceptionally brilliant scholarship, for the Pandits were as conservative as they were slow to shower such titles on others.

Thus the atmosphere in these schools was of quite a peculiar nature. A peculiar reverence for authority was inculcated, but at the same time definite beliefs and dogmas were made a part of the very being of the pupils. His whole outlook of life was moulded in a narrow groove. He knew well what his duties were, but he knew nothing about his privileges. The system made him a willing slave to ideals, and contented with the little he could get. It made him too intellectual and consequently unpractical. Such was the training in these schools, which will be examined in detail later in this chapter.

*Observations on the salient features of methods
used in the indigenous schools.*

Their salient features can be summed up as follows :—

1. Learning by rote.

2. Neglect of writing.
3. Absence of examinations.
4. Monitorial system.
5. No classes.

The elementary as well as higher indigenous schools levied far too exacting demands on the memory of the children. As originality was at a discount and as the store of knowledge was supposed to be locked up in the old books, the best that they could do was to learn them ; but books were not so common in those days. Printed books did not find their way into the United Provinces before the second or third decade of the nineteenth century. Public libraries were unknown, and the private libraries were inaccessible to strangers. Copying out a book, even when the necessary material was available, was an expensive and tedious process, for with so little demand speed in writing could not be developed. Even when a person did possess a book, it was never safe, for it might be stolen by a more greedy person.

Thus it was best not to trust to books, but to store the knowledge in one's mind. As a Sanskrit couplet said : " The man who keeps his knowledge is his book and his money with other persons, at the time of emergency finds that he has neither knowledge nor money." Thus 'aids to memory' were invented. Poetry is easier to learn by heart than prose, short sentences or phrases are better remembered than long paragraphs, and a thing can

be learnt with ease if it is repeated with a swing. So, lexicons, *materia medica*, works on astronomy, medicine, and even such prosaic subjects as mathematics and philosophy were reduced to verse. Grammar was compressed into formulae. Arithmetical rules for everyday use were reduced to *gurs* (formulae), and the best they thought they could do was to commit them to memory. Although 'faculty psychology' has been exploded, yet it is perhaps due to this wonderful 'cramming' of centuries and generations that Indian students as a class are such wonderful 'crams.' It should not be supposed that this was the state of affairs in all schools. There were some which went beyond it and argued out things for themselves, but even they required knowledge by rote of books as a necessary preliminary condition. So far as village schools were concerned, memory work was far too much in evidence there.

Neglect of writing was also a necessary result of circumstances. Here also the material was lamentably scarce. The practice on the *patti* or *takhti* could not proceed beyond a certain limit, for it is difficult to write small-sized letters on an ordinary *patti*, and paper was as rare as it was costly. Even adults could ill afford to buy the 'bamboo' paper, which was made to last centuries. The children could not be expected to procure it for school practice. Moreover, in villages they seldom felt the necessity of writing anything, not

even a letter ; for all their relatives were generally either too near or too far away for letters. Of course, the sons of *bunias* and *mahajans*, who had to keep account-books, needed considerable practice in schools, for graceful and neat writing was a necessary qualification of a *munim* (clerk) ; but even they could not afford to use paper profusely. Although the children could not be given sufficient practice, the quality of handwriting was very high. I have seen *bahis* (account-books) of many bankers in the United Provinces, some of them a century or two centuries old, and I was struck by the quality of handwriting. In Persian schools specially, calligraphy was an art which was much patronised. The exquisite manuscripts of the pre-British period, whether in Persian, Arabic, Sanskrit or Hindi bear ample testimony to this fact.

Another striking feature of these schools was the complete absence of examinations. The relations between the teacher and the taught were generally so intimate, and consequently the former knew about the latter so much that he felt no need of confirming his opinion by a test. A second purpose of an examination is to serve as a help in securing a livelihood or a position in life ; but in those days people did not study for service. Each one had his hereditary occupation to look after, and 'services' were generally 'caste' or 'family' properties, irrespective of academic qualifications. The test of scholarship which was widely respected

was not examination but maintaining one's position throughout the whole life, and the *shastrarthas* or *mubahisas* (discussions on learned or religious subjects) provided ample opportunities for scholars to win laurels. Thus examinations were not demanded even by the patrons. Their absence, while encouraging true scholarship in some, resulted in keeping no standard in view for the ordinary student.

The single-teacher system was responsible for the development of the 'monitorial' system, especially in the higher schools. The teacher had to give so much time to the advanced students (who had to be taught individually) that he found little or no time for coaching the beginners. These were entrusted to the care of senior students who were generally competent to coach them. This system was not much in vogue in elementary schools, for there even the most senior pupil was not competent enough to coach even the most backward. Moreover, the number of children was small, and the time demanded by individual children was comparatively short.

Lastly, these schools were a collection of individual pupils and not of classes. Each boy proceeded at his own pace and studied the subject or subjects he liked, and read the books he preferred, or, to be more correct, those books on which he could lay his hands. Thus there were few boys in a school with common subjects, common books

working at a common speed. Sometimes groups of three or four pupils were formed and they took their lessons together, but it was neither obligatory nor usual. In the elementary schools the recitation of multiplication tables was a 'class' in which every pupil had to take part ; except for that each pupil formed a class by himself. While in higher schools this system meant sound scholarship for the pupils ; in the elementary schools it resulted in considerable waste of the time and energy of the teacher as well as of the children.

Discipline.—There was a sharp contrast between the discipline of the elementary and higher schools. In the latter seldom, if ever, was any, punishment inflicted. The 'reverence complex' was so intensely strong in the *pathshala* pupil (as it is even to this day) that obedience to his *guru* (even in absurd cases) seemed quite natural to him. Certain conventional formalities, beliefs and examples of others made this reverence to the *guru* a part of his nature. Take, for instance, the following stanzas which almost every good Hindu repeats every morning :—

अखंडमंडलाकारं व्याप्तं येन चराचरम् ।

तत्पदं दर्शितं येन तस्मै श्रीगुरुवे नमः ॥ इत्यादि

“ I bow to my *guru* who shows me the feet of Him who is pervading the endless universe.

I bow to my *guru*, who puts the *anjan*²³ of knowledge in my eyes, by which I can see in the darkness of ignorance.

The *guru* is Brahma, the *guru* is Vishnu, the *guru* is Siva, the *guru* is God Himself. I bow to my *guru*."

When these sentiments are inculcated in the pupil from his childhood, he is likely to accept them as truisms, but they are helped by coventional etiquette. When a pupil goes to *pathshala*, he touches his *guru*'s feet or puts his head on his *guru*'s feet, and when he leaves, he repeats this. He enters school with a ceremony in which the *guru* is worshipped and on the '*Guru Puja*' day once a year he is worshipped with full formalities. No man may go to visit his *guru* and king without a present. Even the poorest would come with some gift.

Then, these pupils saw the examples set by others. The late Pandit Aditya Ram Bhattacharya, the Professor of Sanskrit in the Muir Central College, lived near my house in Allahabad. He had taught Sanskrit to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, the great Indian leader. Whenever he came to visit the old Pandit, he would put his head on his *guru*'s feet. This example by a man who is so much respected by all communities alike had a tremendous influence over our youthful minds.

²³ A soothing pigment for the eyes.

Such examples convinced the pupils that it is an honour to wait upon and serve the teacher. They would not do anything which might displease their teacher. This reverence for authority solved most of the problems of discipline in the higher schools.

But the discipline in the elementary schools was based more on force than on love and reverence, although they attempted to copy the forms as well as the spirit of the higher schools. The school hours, however, were far too long for the little children, and the abstract and monotonous nature of the school work was generally so distasteful, and the allurements of the streets, fields and gardens were so strong, that the teacher found that in order to secure the attention of the little urchins something more tangible than love and respect was necessary. In an age when the adult nature had been hardened by centuries of oppression, persecution and even by inhuman torture, it is no wonder that sometimes there were teachers who inflicted punishments which were anything but humane. Mr. Reid, in his Report of 1850 described four forms of punishments which he had noticed in the indigenous schools in the North-Western Provinces. I give his opinion *in extenso*:²⁴ “The punishments above described, and which partake strongly of the nature of ‘practical jokes,’ are common to Persian

²⁴ H. S. Reid, *Report on Indigenous Education, and Vernacular Schools*, Agra, 1852, p. 35.

and Hindi schools, but they are generally of so severe, or of so degrading a nature, that the teacher dares not to inflict them on the children of his more influential patrons. The boy thus often escapes punishment, when he most richly deserves it. If a boy is severely beaten, his parents make the fact an excuse of removing him, taking especial care to forget the small arrears due for his schooling. In short, such severe punishments overshoot the mark. They are too cruel to be put up with. The most incorrigible boy seldom comes in for more than (as one of the visitors terms them) 'slapping, and soft flogging.' " It should be remembered that most parents (at any rate in the rural areas) left the attendance at school to the option of the children. They did not compel them to go there. In such cases, severe punishment was a suicidal policy for a teacher, for it not only drove off the victim, but frightened away many others. Although it must be admitted that occasionally a teacher could be found who was more a lion-tamer than a teacher, and once in a while parents also of a similar nature could be encountered.

Criticism.—We have now seen the scope, methods, objects and life of the elementary as well as of the higher indigenous schools. At this distant day, it is difficult to judge them. The opinions of those who knew them are unfortunately so scrappy and so partial that it is difficult to compute their real worth. They had either enthusiastic admirers

or violent denouncers.²⁵ "The early missionaries," to quote Dr. F. W. Thomas, "were too closely occupied in denouncing the immoralities of the Hindu gods, as related in the 'shasters' to supply more than vague, general and prejudiced hints concerning the education going on around them." The Anglicists and Orientalists were almost as one-sided. Even long after the practical genius of Bentinck had settled the question, people were by no means reconciled, and they could not see things in a truer perspective. Writing in 1871, Dr. George Smith of Edinburgh, in his report on the educational works and appliances of the Indian department in the London international exhibition, said:²⁶ "The Madrissas and Toles gave to a few a very high—in the Asiatic sense—kind of instruction, both philosophical and philological, but the result was undoubtedly the propagation of false knowledge in its worst forms. The intellect was not trained, the life was not affected for good. Both Madrissas and Toles were, as they are to this day, dreamy schools for teaching false history, false science, false metaphysics and false ethics." On the other hand Dr. Leitner considered that many of the Pandits and Moulvis would be the pride of German universities. He discovered relics of the

²⁵ F. W. Thomas, *The History and Prospects of British Education in India*, London, 1891, p. 2.

²⁶ G. Smith, *Report on Educational Works and Appliances* (London International Exhibition), 1871, p. 5.

Kindergarten system in the indigenous system as well as 'modern' methods in higher education. To the standard achieved in those schools he gives full praise. Frederick Pincot, a distinguished civilian of Bihar, rated these schools very highly.

All these criticisms have in them an element of truth. If it is remembered that the system of education which the British found in India was the lowest watermark of the educational efforts of a people who had had no peace for centuries, and who had no incentive for education save tradition and general respect for learning, a better and sympathetic view might be taken. To begin with, education was either too altruistic (as in the higher *pathshalas* and *madrassas*) or too utilitarian (as in the elementary schools). The one scrupulously excluded all that had a worldly touch in it, going so far as to avoid even the language of the people. The other as violently restricted itself to things which were of intensely practical value. A society which had no middle class worth the name, could not steer a middle course. So far as actual instruction was concerned, the higher schools gave a good account of themselves. An eminent writer²⁷ thinks that the old Pandits could well be compared with the pre-Renaissance scholars in scholarship. They despised superficiality and their object was thorough-

²⁷ F. W. Thomas, *The History and Prospects of British Education in India*, p. 15.

ness. Like Browning's grammarian, they had an insatiable thirst for knowledge.²³ "Commentaries on commentaries are committed to memory. The minutest questions evoke discussions lasting for days. All the resources of an eminently philosophic language are one day exhausted in building up arguments on one side of a question: the next day, when the pupils have been thoroughly convinced, the master will say '*tad asat*,' 'all that is fallacious,' and proceed to give a complete refutation of all he has before advanced." Time had no consideration for them, but the arguments were generally of a set type, and in the circumstances of exclusiveness they could not be otherwise. The unpractical nature of these discussions has been very well shown in the trenchant satire "*parhe parhe paththar*" (the wasted education) of Ambika Dutt Vyas. The hair-splitting capacity was taken to a wonderful length, but the knowledge of grammar, existing medicine, rhetoric, rituals, poetry, Puranas, *shastras*, Quran, etc., was really substantial. It is true that no critical study was made of these subjects and the teachers knew more of the subject than about it. Considering the fact that even in Europe such study is of comparatively recent date, it is no cause of surprise that in India the higher schools did not adopt it. The elementary schools

²³ F. W. Thomas, *The History and Prospects of British Education in India*, London, 1891, p. 10.

gave a wonderful training in the three R's. The boys attained a proficiency in mental arithmetic which has not been equalled, much less surpassed, in our better organised schools. According to Pincot these schools gave to the pupils²⁹ "the knowledge best calculated to be really beneficial, that is, reading, writing and arithmetic. By processes unknown to Europe" continues Pincot, "these humble schools carry mental arithmetic to a surprising length. A large number of these naked little children would astound our most practised city clerks by running on with the multiplication table up to one hundred times one hundred, and the smarter boys will readily perform a variety of mental arithmetic feats which seem incredible to those only versed in our slow process." The intricate but marvellously accurate and scientific indigenous book-keeping and banking system was taught in a manner which compels our admiration. In spite of the difficulties in obtaining writing material, the Arabic, Persian and Hindi calligraphy in these schools was of a very superior standard, a standard which again is almost unknown to-day in our schools. A glance at even old inartistic and ordinary manuscripts or *mahajan's bahis* will convince even a sceptic. Thus at least two R's were well-taught in those schools, and considering

²⁹ Fredrick Pincot, B.C.S. *Primary Education in India*, p. 8.

the difficulties in getting material for reading in that pre-printing period, reading was not so very bad either.

But whatever might have been the value of the instruction imparted in the indigenous schools, there is no doubt that their greatest influence was felt in the formation of character in their pupils. A certain 'set' type was produced. Respect for authority, devotion to learning for its own sake, humility, an almost ascetic attitude towards life, and great regard for spiritual values were the outstanding traits of the products, of these schools. The personal relations between the teacher and the taught were of a patriarchal type, where the teacher was the ultimate law-giver, guide, philosopher and friend. The *guru* himself set an example by his devotion to his *guru* and by his obedience to the authority of the scriptures as well as that of the powers 'that be.' To quote Pincot, once more³⁰ "they (these schools) discipline the heart and mind, teaching reverence to God and to authority, they impart a love of learning, while upholding the dignity of labour by making it an honour to wait upon their master." As for devotion to learning for its own sake, hosts of living Pandits and classical students even to-day will give ample testimony on this point. Humility was another

³⁰ Fredrick Pincot, B.C.S. *Primary Education in India*, p. 10.

virtue which distinguished the product of these and especially the higher schools. विद्या ददाति विनयं ' Learning gives humility ' and ' just as a tree laden with fruit bends, so does a scholar.' Adam, in his report, has recorded this trait of these scholars. He says :³¹ " They are in general shrewd, discriminating, and mild in their demeanour. The modesty of their character does not consist in abjectness to a supposed or official superior, but is equally shown to each other. I have observed some of the worthiest speak with unaffected humility of their own pretensions to learning, with admiration of the learning of a stranger and countryman who was present, with high respect of the learning of a townsman who happened to be absent, and with just praise of the learning of another townsman after he had retired, although in his presence they were silent respecting his attainments." The generous compliment of Vedantadesika Swami to his rival, who had challenged him, and who in a test could not compose even half the number of the stanzas that the Swami did in a given time, and therefore was defeated and disgraced, is typical of these people. He said, " the pig gives birth to half a dozen young ones at a time, they are of no importance, but an elephant begets only one cub which attains glory by being ridden by kings."

³¹ Adam, quoted by F. W. Thomas in his *British Education in India*, p. 8.

Devotion to learning was a necessary corollary to the proposition that "pursuit of knowledge was the keystone of their religion, and partook of the nature of a sanctification." Hosts of Pandits and scholars in Benares and other places even to-day voluntarily choose a life of poverty in devoted pursuit of a knowledge which has practically lost all economic value, simply because they think it is part of their religion to learn it. In fact the poverty and misery of the life of a Sanskrit student is so great that had it not been for the ennobling and sustaining effect of the training they must have relapsed into utter barbarism. Thus an almost ascetic attitude towards life was inculcated. Plain living and high thinking was not only preached but practised. Even comforts, much less luxury, were incompatible with their views, for did not the old sage say

सुखार्थिनः कुतो विद्या

कुतो विद्यार्थिनः सुखम् ॥

Where can those who seek comfort, obtain knowledge, and where can seekers of learning obtain comfort? "The habits thus formed and sanctioned by tradition and scripture, became crystallized. Adam has given a very good account of their life. He writes:³² "I saw men not only unpretending, but plain and simple in their manners, and though

³² F. W. Thomas, *The History and Prospects of British Education in India*, Cambridge, 1891, p. 8.

seldom, if ever, offensively coarse, yet reminding me of the very humblest classes of English and Scottish peasantry ; living constantly half-naked and realising in this respect the description of savage life ; inhabiting huts which, if we connect moral consequences with physical causes, might be supposed to have the effect of stunting the growth of their minds, or in which only most contracted minds might be supposed to have room to dwell and yet several of these men are adepts in the subtleties of the profoundest grammar of what is probably the most philosophical language in existence ; not only practically skilled in the niceties of its usage, but also in the principle of its structure ; familiar with all the varieties and applications of their national laws and literature and indulging in the abstrusest and most interesting disquisitions in logical and ethical philosophy.”³³ The humble village schools inculcated the same qualities, although their civility, unsupported by learning was more often than not taken for servility.

But, paradoxical as it may seem, to my mind these very virtues were their defects. Vice has been defined by somebody as virtue overstrained, and the indigenous schools carried those things too far which should have been great virtues had they been fostered in moderate quantities. The respect

³³ Quoted by F. W. Thomas, *The History and Prospects of British Education in India*, p. 8.

for authority was so much emphasized that the pupil could not think or act for himself. His powers of initiative and independent thinking were stunted. Most people will realise the value of dogmatic teaching in certain subjects at certain stages, and also the value of scholastic exercise in an established train of thought which gives correctness and shape to thinking. But these should be regarded as instruments of advancement, and not as tenets beyond which all independent enquiry is not merely idle but profane also. Further, the teachers took up the attitude that the theories that they propounded were the last word on the subjects, and they and their pupils could do nothing better than accept, believe and practise them. In fairness to those people, it must be admitted that in their schools they taught those schools of thought also which did not agree with them, and taught them faithfully. But the teacher used his authority, quite *bona fide*, in creating a prejudice against them by calling them heresies. The teachers may have been right from the point of view of their convictions, but the fact remains that the pupils were chained to the past, which they were led to regard as unsurpassable, and thus all motive and energy for further investigations were destroyed.

Humility was so much encouraged that all courage to differ or resist was completely killed, and while in the learned it remained a virtue, in the ignorant it became a dangerous cloak to conceal

their ignorance and even their vices. The ascetic attitude in its turn drew off the best brains from the economic, social and other secular spheres of activities, and thus not only belittled material progress but actually retarded it. The higher values were so much emphasized that the essential nature of man, the cravings of the flesh, were overlooked, and the beginning and end of all training was repression, repression and repression. In short, it was a wonderful system to rivet human mind to the past and to dilate on an Utopia—not of the future, but of the past, with the result that the gaze of the pupils and, consequently of the whole people was turned backwards.

So much from the national point of view. From the individual point of view, in spite of the disadvantages that they suffered owing to the causes described above, the more educated of them obtained a capacity of intellectual enjoyment and material contentment which made their lives bright, cheerful and happy. Even those who could obtain only the necessary rudiments of the three R's, shared in these advantages. But above all, they felt a living faith in God, which kept them moral and religious and gave them a wonderful sustaining strength to fight temptations and lead upright lives.

CHAPTER III

EARLY BEGINNINGS

Agra was a far cry from Calcutta, and the repercussions of the fights between the Anglicists and Orientalists did not penetrate the benighted province. In 1840, the control of education was transferred from the Government of Bengal to that of the North-Western Provinces, and in 1843 the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir G. R. Clerk, declared that whatever might have been the condition in Bengal, the North-Western Provinces were not fit for any extensive introduction of the English education. There was no incentive for learning English. There were but few European residents, no wealthy body of European merchants transacting business in English, no English bar, no attorneys, no European seaborne trade, and but few posts in which a knowledge of the English language was necessary for a discharge of duties. Added to this was the difficulty that comparatively few boys could stay long enough in schools to master a foreign language. For these reasons the local government's decision was that "to produce any perceptible impression

upon the general mind of the people in this part of the country," the attempt should be made to introduce education "through the medium of the vernacular language and not through that of any foreign tongue."¹ This decision showed that the authorities in the North-Western Provinces did not believe in the 'filtration' theory. They wisely resolved to reach the masses direct instead of leaving them to the doubtful chance of being enlightened by the reflected and diluted light of the few highly educated Indians.

With this object in view, a suggestion was made to register, examine and reward the existing schools, and to improve the village schools by supervision, advice and encouragement and by the distribution of elementary books suited to their wants. With this object in view a curator of school books was appointed in 1844 for the controlling, supervising and the proper circulation of class-books, and the Collectors and Tahsildars were instructed to help in circulating these books.

Sir George Clerk was succeeded by Mr. J. Thomason whose father had unsuccessfully laid a scheme of mass education before Lord Moira. Mr. Thomason was an officer of rare ability, liberal views and broad vision, and it was during his tenure of office that the Government began to take a

¹ *Selections from Educational Records*, Part II (Bureau of Education, India), p. 229.



THE HON'BLE MR. J. THOMASON

considerable and systematic interest in the education of the masses.

This interest began with the solicitude of Government for safeguarding the interests of the agriculturists. After the great

The Great Settlement of the land revenue in the Province, and its connection with Education. settlement of the land revenue, the Government discovered that the land in the province was very minutely sub-divided, and the

rights to land were of many and perplexing kinds. In order to protect the people the Government tried to preserve these rights ; they defined their nature and extent ; and devised a system for their complete registration. During the settlement, every field in the province was measured, its map drawn, and a record was formed of every right attaching to the field. The village Patwari's papers, which showed these rights, were compiled on a uniform system, and were the acknowledged groundwork of all judicial orders regarding the rights in land.

The success of this system, and the interests of the men whose sole means of subsistence was land, demanded that the people should clearly understand the nature of their rights, and satisfy themselves as to the accuracy of the *patwari's* papers. For this they must be able to read and write and must know a little arithmetic and mensuration. But it was obvious that such knowledge among the masses in the rural areas was conspicuous by its

absence. The depressed state of general education of the people during the chaos after the disintegration of the Moghal Empire continued under British administration, and was apparent enough to the Government, but its extent was not known. The country did possess a system of education, but its scope, efficiency and effects were not examined.

Mr. Thomason sent round a circular to the District Collectors asking them to supply information regard-

ing the educational conditions in

Mr. Thomason's
Survey of Educa-
tional conditions
and encourage-
ment of Educa-
tion.

each village under their jurisdiction.

Comprehensive information regard-

ing schools, children, teachers, etc.,

was to be collected. In this circular

the Government impressed upon

the district officers the need for educating the masses for administrative purposes. It said²: "There is thus a direct and powerful inducement to the mind of almost every individual to acquire so much of reading, writing and arithmetic and mensuration, as may suffice for the protection of his rights. Until this knowledge be universal it is vain to hope that any great degree of accuracy can be attained in the preparation of the papers." But pious hopes regarding the cultural benefits of education were also expressed³: "When the mind of the whole

² Circular letter of 1845.

³ Ibid.

people has thus been raised to a sense of the importance of knowledge, it is natural to suppose that many from the mass will advance further and cultivate literature for the higher rewards it offers or even for the pleasures which its acquisition occasions."

It is clear from the above that the Government were moved with the highest motives. They not only realised the utilitarian value of education but also its cultural benefits. A people who had been made fatalists by the oppression of several centuries required some ennobling agency to raise them to a point where they might no longer be insensible to their own interests. The Government had not realised sufficiently that the people were so ignorant and fatalistic that they would not learn the three R's even for the protection of their rights, but the Government were right in thinking that education was the most feasible remedy for the regeneration of the people.

The British genius does not believe in revolutionary changes. It tries to preserve continuity, to reform existing institutions and to turn them to good account. In this spirit the circular also suggested the means of realising the object in view. It said⁴: "The means for this purpose are at hand in the indigenous schools which are

Importance of
Indigenous schools
realised.

⁴ Ibid.

scattered over the face of the country. Their number may not at present be large, and the instruction conveyed in them is known to be rude and elementary. But their numbers may be increased and the instruction conveyed in them may be improved."

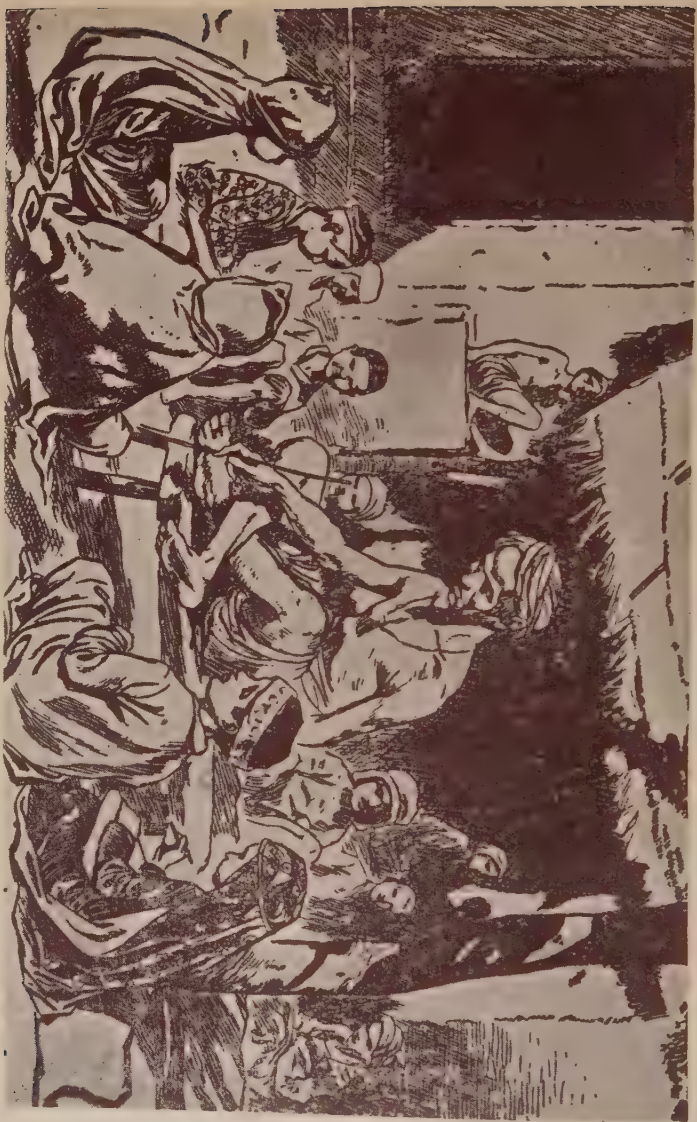
Thus the policy at the commencement was to strengthen and improve the existing institutions. Government believed that so far as popular education was concerned, these institutions were pregnant with great possibilities, and instead of implanting new creations among a suspicious and superstitious people, it was wiser, safer and more economical to encourage and improve indigenous schools.

Another important and valuable line of policy which this circular enunciated was that education was not to be thrust upon the

Popular initiative people, nor was it to be promoted to be encouraged. by the sole exertions of the officials.

The Government may give 'powerful inducements' and 'may raise the people to a sense of the importance of knowledge,' but the action must come from the people. It was not to be one-sided. The people must take their share not only of expenditure but also of interest and exertion. Education could hope to progress in the country only if the people co-operated with the Government, and the circular says⁵: "In this, as in all

⁵ Ibid.



A Village School in Hindustan—Latter half of the Eighteenth Century.
From a contemporary sketch.

other operations, it is most important to carry the people with you, and to aid their efforts, rather than remove from them the stimulus to exertion by making all the effort yourself. Judicious encouragement on your part will promote the formation of village schools, and enlist on your side in the work of education the persons whom the people themselves may select as their teachers, and support for that purpose." It further hoped "that before long the village schoolmaster will be as recognised a servant of the community, as any other of the servants whose remuneration is now borne amongst the authorised village charges."

While the circular advised the district officers to encourage education, its main purpose was to collect information in order to enable the Government to formulate its scheme. The enquiry was extended over thirty-one districts, including five of those which now form part of the Punjab, Oudh was not yet annexed. The enquiry showed

Educational conditions in 1845.

that, excluding the missionary and English schools, the total number of all kinds of educational institutions in the province was 7,966, which were distributed in cities, towns and villages. Out of 1,933,138 male children of school-going age,⁶ only 70,826 or 3·7 per cent were receiving any kind of instruction. The percentage, small as it was, was no indication of the poor quality

⁶ *Vide* Appendix IV.

of instruction. The enquiry gave some idea of the extent of the depressed state of education. Even landowners did not care to educate their children. Illiteracy among the population was the rule and in villages a man with even a smattering of education was an exception.

Mr. Thomason used the result of this enquiry as a powerful argument for his educational scheme,

which was foreshadowed in his
 Mr. Thomason's first scheme of circular. In his decision that the Educational endowments. indigenous schools should be increased, improved and encouraged,

he was influenced by Mr. Adam's report on the indigenous schools in Bengal and Behar. But the method of making them permanent was Mr. Thomason's own. The Government in India had for a long time been despotic, and naturally people expect much direction from a despotic government. Mr. Thomason's ideal that people should look after their own education is possible only in democratic countries, and state control of education was not in force even in England at the time. He realised the difficulties, and tried to combine state benevolence with modern popular initiative. The former rulers had occasionally given land grants or *muafis*⁷ (a kind of *jagirs*⁸) for educational purposes. They were

⁷ *Muafi*—Land grants whose rent has been remitted for all time.

⁸ *Jagir*—Land or estate confirmed on a person.

generally given to a person and were his property, and descended to his successor. People were used to the system of *jagir* and they understood and appreciated it. The East India Company had confiscated most of the *jagirs*—even some of those given for educational purposes. Mr. Thomason thought that if the Government were to give help, they should give it in a form likely to be understood and appreciated by the people. The need for Government help was obvious. The people were poor, and although they were doing something, it was clear that they could not support schools without the aid of the Government. He therefore submitted a scheme by which a *jagir* of from five to ten acres of land, of the annual rental value from Rs. 20 to Rs. 40, was to be endowed for a school in every village of a certain size. The Government were to give up their revenue from this land provided the Zamindars (landholders) gave an assurance that it was appropriated for the purpose of maintaining a schoolmaster. Thus the new *jagir* unlike the older ones, was to be impersonal. The Western idea of popular interest was incorporated in the scheme by putting the onus of initiative on the local Zamindars and respectable and principal people. The teacher was also to be appointed by them, and was to possess certain minimum qualifications. State control was also there. The Collector was, on receiving applications from the Zamindars and the people, to satisfy himself of "the sincerity of the desire" and "the reality of the

proposed endowment," and was then to recommend to the Government the remission of the revenues of the proposed land. The state control was to be a real one. The appointment of the teachers was to be confirmed by the Collector, who, as well as his assistants, were to be empowered to inspect schools, and were to see that the endowment was "faithfully" appropriated for the support of the schoolmaster. Any inefficient teacher was to be dismissed and the land was to be re-appropriated by the Government if he was not discharged.

The scheme, together with the results of the enquiry, was submitted to the Board of Directors of the East India Company, for in the pre-Mutiny days all expenditure was sanctioned by them. In the covering letter, Mr. R. Thornton, the secretary to the North-Western Provinces Government, said⁹: "This system is most in consonance with the customs and feelings of the people. The schoolmaster will become a recognised village servant, elected and supported in a manner consonant with the usage of the village community." He also gave the reasons which had prompted the Government to recommend a system of *jagirs*. He said¹⁰: "An endowment in land is preferable to a money payment, because it gives greater respectability of station than a pecu-

⁹ Letter from the Government of the N. W. Provinces, dated 18th November, 1846, to the Government of India, para 9.

¹⁰ Ibid. para 10.

niary stipend much exceeding the rent of the land, and because it connects the schoolmaster with the community in a way which renders his services more acceptable to them than if he were the paid servant of the Government." The letter ends with the following remarks almost in what appears to be an attempt to rouse the Directors to a sense of their responsibility¹¹: "It is the standing reproach of the British Government that whilst it continually resumes the endowments of the former sovereigns, it abstains from making any, even for those purposes which it considers most laudable. The present measure in some degree removes this reproach and that in a manner most acceptable to the people at large."

The scheme of *jagirs* requires a critical examination. Mr. Thomason was one of those administrators who tried to touch the imagination of the people; and let it be admitted that at least in India those rulers have been invariably successful who have tried to rule the people through their imagination. The education *jagir* was sure to touch their imagination. Moreover Thomason wanted to make the system truly national by harmonising it with the customs and feelings of the people. In India land excites the imagination of the people to a degree which is hardly imagined by outsiders. A poor and petty Zamindar has greater prestige than a businessman who is a millionaire. The rank and respectability

¹¹ Ibid., p. 242.

of a person depend to a very great extent upon the possession of land. Land was, therefore, sure to raise the status of the teacher, and was calculated to tie him to the community by the strongest of bonds. Certainly it was an easier and more permanent arrangement than constant references to the Board of Directors in England, which was a long and tedious process. Had it been sanctioned, we should have got in every village to-day a permanent foundation which with supplementary income, should have solved the present-day financial problem.

But there were objections to the system proposed. The *jagir* was a relic of a system which was essentially mediæval. Regular payment of salaries in the days of bad roads, bad means of communications and comparative immobility of money, was difficult, and in fact it was so difficult that even those who were paid any salary were paid either yearly or half-yearly. It was true that a *jagirdar* wielded influence, but the paid Government servant was also gaining in prestige. In a way the *jagir* would have made the income of the teacher precarious, for no provision was made for bad har-

The Board of Directors of the East India Company reject the *jagir* scheme. vests, famines or floods, and the income, though secure in the long run, was fraught with constant worries. The Directors did not like this (*jagir*) part of the scheme.

While they rejected this particular part of the scheme, the Directors were even more solicitous of

spreading education among the masses than Mr. Thomason himself. They realised the necessity for giving some powerful impulse to elementary education in the North-Western Provinces, and, businessmen as they were, they agreed that it was most desirable that the numerous landholders should be enabled to verify the entries in the village accounts and to comprehend the extent of their liabilities by giving them instruction in reading and writing with some knowledge of arithmetic and mensuration.

Whether it was due to the philanthropic desire of enlightening the ignorant masses, or whether it was the anxiety to enable them¹² "to verify the entries in the village accounts, and to comprehend the extent of their several liabilities" or both, the Directors enthusiastically endorsed the views of the Lieutenant-Governor regarding the need for spreading education among the villagers. Mr. Thomason had subordinated his enthusiasm to discretion and had been cautious in his proposals. But the Directors took up the cause with an enthusiasm that did them credit. They wrote to the Government of the North-Western Provinces that "under these circumstances, we are prepared to sanction the adoption of some more comprehensive plan of extending and improving the means of popular instruction throughout the country subject to the authority of the

¹² Memoirs on the Statistics of Indigenous Education within the North-Western Provinces, p. 109.

Government of Agra.”¹³ While they disapproved of the endowment of land, they said that they were “disposed to prefer the grant of a monthly stipend to such schoolmasters as may be appointed to the large villages, or to those, if properly qualified, who may be already employed in them, making them responsible to the local government through the constituted authorities for the proper discharge of their duties.”¹⁴

Mr. Thomason submitted a new scheme. It proposed to establish a government school in each *tahsil* (sub-division of a district) which might serve as a model for the neighbourhood. The indigenous schools were not to be neglected. An inspectorate was to be created. The inspectors were to visit the indigenous schools and to give the people and the schools “advice, assistance and encouragement.”¹⁵ The inspectors (who were given the cautious designation of ‘visitors’) could reward the most deserving schoolmasters. This reward might in future be a means of certain remuneration to them. This inspecting agency was to consist of one *zillah* (district) visitor in each district with three *purannah* (sub-district) visitors as his assistants. A

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 110.

¹⁵ Mr. Thomason’s revised scheme (*Selections, Educational Records, Part II, p. 244*).

visitor-general was to be appointed to supervise and direct their work. He was to be at first at least a civilian of talent and experience, because the success of the scheme depended upon his close acquaintance with the land revenue system, and also upon "that influence which a civilian always carries with him in this country."¹⁶

The low ebb at which education must have been at the time in these provinces is clearly shown by the qualifications demanded of these visitors and schoolmasters. The zillah visitor (corresponding to the present deputy-inspector) was to be "conversant with the Hindee and Oordoo languages, so as to be able to read and write them with ease, and to be familiar with the books *ordinarily* read in them. He should also be *acquainted* with *either* Persian or Sanskrit. He should understand the mode in which a settlement '*misl*' is compiled, as also Patwarees' accounts, and arithmetic and land mensuration, as practised by the natives."¹⁷

The purgannah visitors and tahsil schoolmasters were required to¹⁸ "know Oordoo and Hindee," and were to be "familiar with *Ram Surrin Dass*' four books, as also with the usual elementary books in these languages."

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 245.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 246.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 246.

The scarcity of even such meagrely educated people was so great that a zillah visitor was to be given a salary of Rs. 100 to Rs. 200 a month, an amount which to-day, in spite of the depreciation of the value of money, a good M.A. will consider himself fortunate to receive. The purgannah visitor was to receive from Rs. 30 to Rs. 40 per month, while the tahsil schoolmasters were to be paid from Rs. 10 to Rs. 20 per month each. The masters were allowed to receive the "usual fees" paid in the districts in addition to the "*allowance*" from the Government. In spite of such good salaries, the Visitor-General complained that it was difficult to get competent men.

Mr. Thomason proposed at first to introduce the scheme as an experimental measure in eight districts, and it was subsequently to be extended to the

rest of the province. The Directors
 The scheme readily approved this scheme "for
 approved. promoting the education of the
 agricultural classes of the people in reading and
 writing, with some knowledge of arithmetic and
 mensuration."¹⁹ They sanctioned an annual expenditure of Rs. 50,000 for this purpose.

The scheme was accordingly introduced in 1850 in the districts of Bareilly, Shahjehanpur, Agra, Muttra, Mainpuri, Aligarh, Farrukhabad and Etawah.

¹⁹ Memoirs on Statistics of Indigenous Education within the North-Western Provinces, p. 118.

The Government in their resolution on the subject explained the object of the scheme, defined the policy of the Government and laid down the duties of the various functionaries. The resolution gives a glimpse of the higher motive of its author. It says that "the present scheme contemplates the employment of an agency which shall rouse the people to a sense of the evils resulting from ignorance, which shall stimulate them to exertions on their own part to remove this ignorance, which shall furnish them with qualified teachers and appropriate books, and which shall afford rewards and encouragement to the most deserving teachers and pupils."

Mr. Thomason was anxious that the indigenous schools should not be adversely affected, and that the people should be self-supporting. This resolution therefore clearly said that²⁰ "care will be taken to prevent these (tahsil) schools from becoming rivals of the indigenous schools maintained by the natives themselves. This will be effected by making the terms of admission higher than are usually demanded in village schools, and by allowing free admissions only on recommendations given by village schoolmasters who may be on visitors' lists." And it further declared that²¹ "this scheme contemplates

²⁰ Resolution of the Government of N. W. P., dated 9th February, 1850.

²¹ Ibid.

drawing forth the energies of the people for their own improvement, rather than actually supplying to them the means of instruction at the cost of the Government. Persuasion, assistance and encouragement are the means to be principally employed. The greatest consideration is to be shown for the feelings and prejudices of the people, and no interference is ever to be exercised, where it is not desired by those who conduct the institutions. The success of the scheme will chiefly appear in the number and character of the indigenous schools, which may be established. The poor may be persuaded to combine for the support of a teacher ; the rich may be encouraged to support schools for their poorer neighbours, and all the schools that are established may be assisted, improved and brought forward."

The declaration was very liberal in spirit. It attempted to train the people in self-help with

the fullest help from the state.
 The value and importance of Mr. Thomason's scheme.

The fact that later on the indigenous schools were completely replaced by the Government or board schools was due to causes which will be considered in the proper place. Mr. Thomason had interested the state in the education of the masses ; he had set up an educational machinery. A new era had begun in the history of popular education in the North-Western Provinces.

CHAPTER IV

SYSTEMATISATION AND CONSOLIDATION

1850—1882

Mr. H. Steward Reid of the Bengal Civil Service was appointed Visitor-General of schools, and he began his work in 1850. It was a revolutionary innovation, for it was not only to touch but also to stir the most profound depths in the social, moral, economic and political life of the

Influence of the people. But the department was Civil Administrator on the system of Education. inaugurated under the management of civil administrators who had become educationists by adoption. As

a result the system from its very inception was coloured by the view-point of civil administrators. Education was to be a handmaid of civil administration to facilitate the smooth working of the State machinery and to make things easy for the officials. It was to make the revenue system a success that the proposal of educating the peasantry was originally made. In most cases the idea of the moral benefits of education came either as a necessary corollary or as an afterthought, and was appended as a sort of postscript. The curriculum was adapted for this purpose. The very organisation of the department was based on the revenue system of the provinces, and

the civil and revenue officers were instructed to look upon the furtherance of education as one of their duties. The Collector was to visit schools, to reward teachers and scholars, and to encourage them; the civilians gave one more proof of their versatile genius by making experiments in education, and the famous Halkabandi school system was evolved by a Collector. The school books were circulated through Collectors and Tahsildars, and administrators—in high quarters at least—advised on methods of instruction. This fitted very well with the *ma-bap* (paternal) attitude of the administrators. But most of them looked at education as a means of getting better governable subjects and more efficient clerks, Patwaris and Amlahs.¹ Thus “education for Government service” became a tradition of the system of education and has come down to us as a legacy from those days when education was administered by administrators.

Yet it must be admitted that without their efforts the system could not have taken so deep a root in the country as it did. As Mr. Arbuthnot remarked it was difficult to carry out the Halkabandi system “where the European local officers take no interest in the education of the people.”² Although some of them did take genuine interest in

¹ Patwari is the village accountant. Amlah is the general term for the subordinate staff of a Law Court.

² *Report of Education, N. W. P., 1857-58*, p. 39.

the education of the masses, they could not always be expected to look at it from the point of view of educationists.

Mr. Reid found his task difficult, and the motives of the Government misunderstood by the people.

This is not to be wondered at, for

Early difficulties, apart from the depth of ignorance to which the people had sunk, the state administration of education would have come as a shock to them at any time. It was against tradition. It was against Indian polity, for it was too great an interference on the part of the state with the individual and village organisation. They could understand the reward of clothes, books or money to the village teacher or to the pupils by "Collector Sahib," for the rulers had since time immemorial patronised learning. But the state had aimed at nothing less than organisation and centralisation (with secularisation) and so when it came to registering the names of schools and boys, and regular inspection and control by a hierarchy of inspectors, it was something quite novel and inexplicable. The teachers had so far known 'patrons' but not critics of their methods and abilities. They were accustomed to teach individual boys, but not classes. They were 'masters' and had their own ways and individuality. But the inevitable logic of organisation was curtailing that liberty and was merging that individuality into a vast system, in which they were like a tooth of a cog-wheel, insignificant though important. They

could not realise the advantages accruing from such systematisation, but they could plainly, perhaps intuitively, see the loss of their position, prestige and liberty, and, therefore, it is not to be wondered at if some of them, alarmed by the fears of the unknown, helped in fostering suspicions of the new order of things.

The misgivings of teachers were shared by the upper classes. In the beginning they avoided the

Government schools. But as time went on, and when, after the Mu-
 The upper classes and the change in their attitude.

tiny, they were rudely shaken by the events they gradually reconciled themselves to the new state of affairs. The 'literary' classes, especially those like the Kayasths, Buniyas, Khatris, Kashmiris, Brahmans who had been serving the state, as calmly accepted the new schools as they had accepted the new government, and discarded the education of the vanquished rulers in favour of that of the new conquerors. But those who were not so directly connected with the state service, or were too proud of their heritage, took quite a long time to reconcile themselves to the new education, and that too only when they realised their loss of position, as shown by the following lines of Akbar—

सड़क पै मांग है कुलियों की और मेटों की
 कचहरियों में मांग है फ़कत ग्रेजुएटों की
 खराबी है तो शेख़ जी के बेटों की

“ On the road there is a demand for uneducated coolies, and in offices they now take only graduates. The plight of Sheikh's sons is most pitiable [for their family pride prevents them from becoming coolies, and their lack of English education has shut the door of offices against them.]”

Thus during the period under review we find the gradual change of outlook coming over the better classes, so far as the Government schools were concerned. They had acquired so much political consciousness by the end of this period that when in 1885 the Indian National Congress was inaugurated, it found in the ‘ benighted ’ province some of its most violent supporters and opponents. This political awakening could not but influence their attitude towards education, though it must be admitted that most of the enthusiasm displayed by this class for education was for the sake of the loaves and fishes it offered. Mr. M. Kempson, the Director of Public Instruction, had very early discerned the tendency and was right when he said³: “ The measure [i.e., of extending education] I have so generally described would soon draw an important section of the Native community to demand that education from Government as a right which they now

³ *Report on the Progress of Education in the North-Western Provinces for the Year 1861-62.*

thwart and decline. The particular section I allude to is the higher class in towns, and its effect on the Mussulmans generally." With schools. this change of attitude towards education the attitude of the people towards schools also changed. While they had regarded the indigenous schools as their own, the new schools were called *sarkari*,⁴ and they lost their interest in them. This, then, was another result of the innovation. The over-centralised and too well organised department practically left no room for local interest, which became atrophied, and the people began to look to the Government for education (a thing with which they had formerly provided themselves) much in the same way as they looked to it for police protection.

There was yet another, and perhaps unforeseen, result of the state education. The original idea was to found a system based on indigenous efforts, i.e., to supplement, support and improve indigenous schools. But in practice it resulted in the complete replacement of the indigenous schools by Government institutions.

Mr. Reid had to encounter other difficulties also of a different nature. Vernacular education had been decided upon, but there was Prejudice against Vernaculars. an intense prejudice against vernaculars. The classical languages, Sanskrit and Persian, were supposed to be the

⁴ *Sarkari*, i.e., belonging to the Government (*sarkar*)

depositories of knowledge, and the exclusive vehicles of ideas worth knowing. The educated Hindus used the term '*bhasha*' (tongue) contemptuously for Hindi and the Muhammadans despised and ignored Urdu. To convince people that it was worth while to 'learn' their own 'tongue' was an uphill task, and all sorts of devices and even official pressure were exerted to popularise the vernaculars. But once the learning of vernaculars was set moving, it went on by the momentum of its own merits, till it became one of the most powerful movements of the last century. The erstwhile despised Hindi and Urdu were adopted by the Hindus and Muhammadans respectively, and a new issue was added to the unfortunate dissensions of the two communities. The problem that faced the educators (in addition to the one mentioned above) was the one caused by the previous neglect of vernaculars, viz., the paucity of suitable school books in Hindi and Urdu. In addition

to creating a love for vernaculars, they had also to create a school vernacular literature which was not an easy task. The problem was further complicated by the confusion caused by the presence of three characters—Persian, Nagari and Kaithi. The last-named was a 'shorthand' and 'barbarous' form of Nagari, improvised and invented by the Kayasths from whom it took its name. Various agencies, official as well as non-official, helped in its abolition. The many

Difficulties caused by three characters and paucity of suitable books.

*Nagari Pracharini Sabhas*⁵ (notably of Benares and Arrah) worked zealously in this cause. But the problem of Nagari and Urdu or Persian characters assumed a community aspect, and a great controversy was set on foot in which Sir Syed Ahmad, Raja Siva Prasad and Babu Harishchandra took prominent parts, and even to-day it is as bitter as ever. Added to all these problems

Difficulty in obtaining suitable men as teachers and inspectors. in was the one of finding suitable inspectors and teachers. The success of the new system depended upon their ability, and able teachers were rare. The people who were educated at 'colleges' or high schools had too high ambitions to be satisfied with village or Tahsili school teacher-ships. They could not feel at home in a position which entailed work which required exile from towns and demanded missionary zeal and faith. The village parents were likely to be frightened by their new learning and would not repose faith in them. And where they did go, they found themselves unequal to the task. The Hindi farce by Harischandra, *Gram Pathshala Naukari*, depicts the poor plight of an undergraduate in a village school in a very pointed way. Thus the only other source on which they could draw upon for teachers was the 'veterans of an effete system.' But the village schoolmaster,

⁵ Associations whose object is to spread Devanagari script and Hindi language.

especially of the Hindi schools, though ignorant, was not arrogant. He knew his limitations and was willing to improve. Moreover, he knew the ways of the parents of his pupils who knew and trusted him. The change of system was revolutionary enough. It would have been unwise to make great changes in the personnel of the teaching staff at that time.

Thus Mr. Reid's work during his tenure of the Visitor-Generalship was to lay the foundations of a system, to influence the indigenous Mr. Reid's work. schools for the better, to establish and mould the Tahsili schools and to 'create' school literature in the vernaculars. The elaborate rules for the guidance of the Zillah and Parganna visitors were already framed and he set the machinery in motion. After a careful survey of the educational conditions he began establishing Tahsili schools and registering and visiting indigenous schools. It was soon discovered that the teachers of the latter schools were willing to use the series of text books published by the Government and were, as a class, willing to submit to inspection. They were given rewards and were allowed the privilege of recommending their boys to Tahsili schools where they could be admitted free if such recommendation was forthcoming. The permanence of these schools was still not achieved but even where a school was closed, the labour spent on the teacher was generally not lost, for he opened another school

in some other village. Good care was taken that Tahsili schools did not appear as rivals of these schools. But before long another type of school (Halkabandi) was evolved which did become a rival of the indigenous schools. The

The
schools.

Tahsili Tahsili schools were originally proposed as model schools at the headquarters of each Tahsil (a revenue sub-division). They were not handicapped by any tradition. Starting with the eight experimental districts they spread over the whole province with the extension of the scheme. Their curriculum included Hindi, Urdu, history, geography, Euclid, algebra, the Indian system of accounts, and mensuration. Persian and natural science were introduced later, only to be abandoned again. An attempt was made to include English, but it was not encouraged by the Government, which was as well, as otherwise they would have become inefficient Anglo-vernacular schools. Thus later on the object became to make them a sort of upper vernacular schools, and in 1872, they were renamed vernacular middle schools. Before they had been established for long, their efficiency and usefulness became apparent. As early as 1853, the Secretary of the Council of Education, Dr. F. J. Mouat, was so taken with them that he advocated their introduction in Bihar and Bengal.⁶ Their popu-

⁶ *Selections from Educational Records* (Bureau of Education, India), Part II, Chapter VI, p. 262.

larity increased from year to year. Whereas in 1851 they had 1,465 boys, in 1854 they contained 4,688. The progress was all-round. The instruction was higher and better, the number of subjects taught had increased and the boys stayed longer in them than in the indigenous schools. But the increase in number did not mean that this better and higher instruction had attracted any classes different from those who frequented the indigenous schools. They, for the most part remained the same, viz., Brahman, Bunia, and Kayasth. Muhammadans were slow to come, but eventually they came in quite large numbers, and where Persian and Urdu in Persian script were taught their number was very satisfactory. Fifty-eight sub-castes of the Hindus were represented in the schools, but the bulk of the pupils came from the 'literary' castes.

Fees were demanded in these schools, and boys could be admitted free only if they were recommended by their village teacher provided he was on the visitor's list. The original scheme aimed at levying equitable fees, i.e., according to the means of the parent. But in practice it was found impossible to adjust them properly, and consequently a uniform fee of two annas a month was charged. The sum appears trifling to-day, but it has to be multiplied at least by five (if not by more) to find its real value according to present standards. It weighed heavily on the villagers, who were poor and accustomed to pay their dues in kind and that too at

the harvest. The payments were irregular and defaulters were numerous and several hundred boys were paying only one anna per month. Many guardians thought that they were doing a favour to the Government or to individual officers by sending their children, and expected a remission of fees. But gradually strictness in realising fees, with dismissal from school as the penalty for non-payment diminished the number of defaulters.

The teachers, who were given a salary ranging from Rs. 10 to Rs. 20 per month, were allowed to appropriate the fees realised from boys. Later on the teachers were given as a reward the balance after paying the naib (assistant), monitor (if any) and the cost of stationery, etc., from the fee-income. In 1867, however, the expenditure on these schools had increased so much that the income from fees was considered necessary for their maintenance, and it was declared that fees collected were the property of the Government and must be deposited in the nearest treasury.

Later on other changes and improvements were made in these schools. The number of classes (seven) was considered too large, and was reduced to four, and the admission qualification was raised. A departmental examination on a provincial basis was established in 1872, and provided a basis for provincial comparisons and for bringing about uniformity of standard. The answer-papers gave considerable satisfaction to the Director of Public

Instruction, and the attainments of boys in history, geography, arithmetic and Persian were considered quite satisfactory. At the same time it was clear that the study of the 'mother-tongue' had not made the desired progress. The lack of any handwork in these schools was a conspicuous defect, and the success of boys from villages in drawing at the Roorkee Engineering College led the authorities of Saharanpur to introduce it in their schools as an experiment. But it was not generally introduced.

These schools were planted in each Tahsil to serve as models, while they were by no means perfect, they added to the happiness of the boyhood of the provinces by lengthening their school-life. The drudgery of life was postponed, and the pupils were provided with a better intellectual equipment ; if they could not use it to the best advantage in life, it was not the fault of these schools. The fact that the school education came to be regarded as a means of obtaining Government service was due to the mistakes of those who, either to quicken the pace of education by artificial means, or to get better trained men, had changed the attitude of the people towards education. Even those whose standards were very high could see at least some good coming out of the schools. Their success encouraged a critic to say that⁷ " the annual expense of educating each boy is

⁷ *Note on the State of Education in India during 1866-67*
Calcutta, p. 141.

less than Rs. 2-8, exclusive of inspection, an advantage cheaply purchased by the Government, if only the moral benefit to the population in the closing of the indigenous schools and their books be considered." Whether the closing down of indigenous schools was a 'moral' advantage or not, it was certain that from the educationists' point of view 'instruction' had improved. But unfortunately it tended to become narrow and bookish from the very beginning. The school atmosphere became unreal and the interest in the surroundings of the pupils had begun to be lost. A critic remarked,⁸ "Names of places, things and persons occurring in course of reading, which would afford to an enlightened teacher the most obvious opportunities of adding something useful to the boy's stock of information, and some interest to the lessons, are passed over without notice. No curiosity to obtain information is evinced on the part of boys or encouraged on the part of teachers. Under such circumstances it cannot be expected that either teacher or taught should manifest deep interest in the subjects of lessons, or proceed with them otherwise than in a dull, tiresome, monotonous style that communicates a deadness, amid such apparent animation, to the whole proceedings of the school." This was a natural result of an education which had no relationship with the activities of life. Further, the too

⁸ *Report of Education, N. W. P.*, 1851-52, p. 226.

literary character of the teaching encouraged the tyranny of the written word. Apart from the system, in part at least, the reason was the lack of the proper type of teachers.

Halkābandi schools.—But the Tahsili schools were to be models only. The actual battle against illiteracy was to be fought in village schools, and according to Mr. Thomason's scheme, the indigenous village schools were to be improved by inspection, advice and the granting of rewards. But in 1851, a scheme was put in operation which sealed the fate of these schools. Finding perhaps indigenous schools too difficult to improve, Mr. Alexander, Collector of Muttra, resolved to open new schools. It was impossible to open a school in each village, so a *halkā* (circuit) of villages was selected, and the number of boys of school-going age⁹ was ascertained. The revenue of the *halkā* was also found out, and this formed the basis of the capacity of the people to pay. The guardians of the boys, however, were not to be taxed. The landlords agreed to contribute towards the expenses of the school, and as the Zamindars plead *haisiyat* (capacity) in matters of contributions, they were asked to contribute one per cent on their revenue. But this contribution was wholly (at least in name) 'voluntary,' or, as Mr. A. J. Arbuthnot cynically remarked,¹⁰ "as voluntary as those (subscriptions) which

⁹ *Vide* Appendix IV.

¹⁰ *Report 1857-58* (Education, N. W. P.), p. 40.

Englishmen frequently record when a charity list goes round." Thus when the cost of a school was secured (by written agreements) the school was opened in the most central village, to which boys from the *halka* could go and get free education.¹¹ The Government shared the burden equally with the Zamindar. The scheme worked well in Muttra and was especially liked by the authorities as it was maintained by the efforts of the people themselves, and perhaps also because their control was wholly in the hands of the officials.

Their success in Muttra attracted the attention of the neighbouring collectors and the Halkabandi schools were started not only in the eight experimental districts, but in other districts of the province as well. The movement spread with marvellous rapidity. In Etawah alone 181 schools with 5,186 boys were in full working order within a year. They were meant to be elementary schools, and reading, writing, arithmetic, mensuration and geography were taught in them. In the beginning the standard achieved was not high. Writing in 1859, Mr. A. O. Hume, the Collector, remarked,¹² "Few at the present time can do more than read and

¹¹ The first batch of the Halkabandi schools was started in the *parganna* of Kosi under the supervision of Mir Imdad Ali.

¹² *Report on Halkabandi Schools in Zillah Etawah*. (Selections from the Records of Government, North-Western Provinces, Vol. III, Allahabad, 1867, p. 467).

write Hindi with difficulty, and do the *simplest* sums in arithmetic. There *are* boys it is true, but certainly not above 10 per cent of the scholars, who have learnt to read and write Hindi or Urdu fluently and well, and who have made considerable progress in mathematics." The total good done by the *halkabandi* schools was summed up as follows¹³: "The boys are kept out of mischief, are taught at any rate from good books, out of which they can learn no harm, but that I fear is all." One of the causes of the meagreness of these attainments (apart from the lack of suitable teachers) was the short period for which boys stayed in schools. In 1866-67, in the circle No. 1, out of 27,151 boys attending the four classes of Halkabandi schools only 4,487 belonged to the two senior classes. The plain fact was that the poor agriculturists could hardly afford to lose the services of their boys, and if they were big enough to go to school they were big enough to work in fields or pastures. They could attend only during the slack season. Thus it was vain to expect higher attainments. Had it not been for official support, the new schools would have been as short-lived as the indigenous schools. Mr. Arbuthnot frankly confessed the difficulty of carrying out the Halkabandi system where the European officers took no interest in it.¹⁴

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ *Report, N. W. P.*, 1857-58, p. 39.

The decline of the indigenous schools.—The Halkabandi schools were rivals of the indigenous schools, and the effect of former's competition was disastrous for the latter. The indigenous schools were not the creation of the Education Department, nor had it any great control over them, so it neglected them and considered them useless. Up to the year 1877-78 the returns for the indigenous schools were included in the reports of the Education Department, but after that year no mention was made of them in the reports, partly because their statistics were not trustworthy and partly because they were not under the government inspection. With the founding of the state (Halkabandi) schools, their discouragement had begun. As early as 1857-58, the Director of Public Instruction said of them¹⁵: "They are notoriously incapable of fulfilling the proper mission of a school. It is almost hopeless to improve them *en masse*. The teachers are in no way under our control." The people, however, liked these schools and patronised them. Commenting on this, the Director said¹⁶: "The agricultural classes spend Rs. 1,90,000 per year for schools under the department. The popular schools are maintained at a cost of Rs. 2,65,000 per annum. This large expenditure to a great degree is a mere waste of funds, owing to the ignorance of the teach-

¹⁵ Report, N. W. P., 1857-58, p. 41.

¹⁶ Report, N. W. P., 1859-60, p. 37.

ers and the want of all system and combination." The new state schools were better patronised and gave gratuitous instruction, while the indigenous schools were not only neglected but were also ridiculed and discouraged, and were costly. The children were naturally attracted to the better patronised and free institutions. The indigenous schools also suffered in another way. The best of their teachers left them for the government schools on account of better pay. Mr. J. C. Nesfield in his evidence before the Commission of 1882 candidly admitted that¹⁷ "the best indigenous schools have, however, been absorbed long ago by the Educational Department, or have been so irretrievably weakened that, unless the Government schools are abolished to make room for them, I think it is now too late to talk of aiding or improving them. They have been superseded beyond recovery, as I think, by the Government system." Their decline was due partly to the poverty of the people to support two sets of schools, partly to their lack of adaptation to new circumstances, and also partly to the fact that the presence of a system patronised by the government in the long run degraded them in the eyes of the people. However, there is much truth in the following remarks of Dr. G. W. Leitner¹⁸: "Had the

¹⁷ Appendix to *Education Commission Report* (1883). N. W. P. Section, p. 258, Calcutta, 1884.

¹⁸ Leitner: *History of Indigenous Education in the Punjab*, Calcutta, 1882, p. 21.

government devoted itself to the improvement of the (indigenous) school-books and schoolmasters, instead of establishing a few new schools of its own and thereby encouraging the belief that it was for the state, and not for the community to look after education, the work of general improvement would have been substituted for that of partial construction."

Adam's investigations in Bengal and Bihar, Sir Thomas Munro's enquiries in Madras, and Sir Mountstuart Elphinstone's survey

The Education in Bombay had revealed depressing conditions of education. Mr.

Thomason's survey of 1844-45 had clearly shown the fearful decline of indigenous schools. The missionaries had set up an agitation which stirred the consciences of the administrators. The Government realised the necessity of disseminating education among the people, but it was impossible for it to provide schools for the whole population. The general results of the investigations are incorporated in the famous Despatch of 1854. It is a happy coincidence that its author was Sir Charles Wood, the grandfather of the present Viceroy, who is doing so much for those masses of India to whom the Despatch had brought a hope of intellectual emancipation. It has aptly been described as the 'Magna Charta' of English Education in India. It was conceived in a liberal spirit, and, as Lord Dalhousie said, it contained "a scheme of educa-

tion for all India, far wider and more comprehensive than the Local or the Supreme Government could ever have ventured to suggest.”¹⁹ The influence of Mr. Thomason’s scheme on the Despatch is unmistakable. Its main object was to divert the efforts of the Government from the education of the higher classes towards whom they had up to that date been too exclusively directed, and to turn them to the wider diffusion of education among all classes of the people and specially to the provision of primary instruction for the masses. In the words of the Despatch the task before the Government was²⁰ “how useful and practical knowledge, suited to every station in life, may be best conveyed to the great mass of the people, who are utterly incapable of obtaining any education worthy of the name by their own unaided efforts,” and it declared: “we desire to see the active measures of Government more especially directed, for the future, to this object, for the attainment of which we are ready to sanction a considerable increase of expenditure.” In short, it declared a war against illiteracy and recognised the importance of the education of the masses. It advocated the encouragement of the voluntary efforts of the people and suggested a system of grants-in-aid. Vernaculars were not to be

¹⁹ *Selections from Educational Records Bureau of India, Calcutta, 1922, Part II, p. 364.*

²⁰ *Despatch of 1854, Para, 41.*

neglected, and the existing institutions for the study of the classical languages were to be maintained. It required the establishment of a Department of Education in each province and outlined a scheme of education from the vernacular primary school right up to the highest degree examination of a University. Perfect religious neutrality was to be observed.

On the receipt of the Despatch a Department of Public Instruction was organised in the North-Western Province, and Mr. Reid was appointed its first Director. Four circle inspectors were appointed under him and the Zillah and Pargannah visitors were renamed deputy and sub-deputy inspectors respectively. Raja (then Babu) Siva Prasad was one of the first inspectors. The grants-in-aid rules were framed and issued just before the Mutiny, and the Tahsili and Halkabandi schools received a fresh impetus from them. The scheme of Mr. Thomason was sanctioned to be extended to the whole of the province in 1856, just a month after his death. The progress of the Halkabandi schools is an index of the extension of primary education and although they were started in 1851, by 1854 they numbered 758 with 17,000 boys; and in the beginning of 1857 the figures were 1,491 and 34,424 respectively. A normal school was started at Agra in 1852, but to meet the demand for teachers in the schools, two more were started in

Meerut and Benares in 1856 and 1857 respectively.

The scheme of the Despatch had
 Effects of the Mutiny. hardly worked for three years when the Mutiny broke out and the educational work received a serious, though only temporary, set-back. Several officers lost their lives and on the whole the rank and file of the department remained loyal and stuck to their posts. The disloyalty of a few members of the Oriental (Persian) departments created unmerited suspicion of those departments and eventually they were discontinued or discouraged. Thus the possibility of developing a purely vernacular system of education parallel to the English system from the primary to the university stage (*like that in the Punjab*) was lost. The Tahsili school became, as it is even to this day, the highest school where modern education through the medium of vernaculars could be obtained.

The Mutiny was the last flicker of a dying party in the country, which remembering the days of its *hukumat* (rule) made one last desperate effort to regain its lost power with the help of the forces of discontent created at least partly by the Government itself. It did one good thing however. The future of the country was decided once for all. The people realised this and it led to a great searching of hearts. Ultimately even those who were lukewarm in their sympathies with the new regime reconciled themselves to the inevitable, and (as even the most ignorant and superstitious believed that no change was

going to take place for a hundred years²¹) hastened to pay their homage to the 'rising sun.' For a year or two after the Mutiny people were in a sulky mood on account of the disarming of the whole population, but thereafter the path of the education department was smooth till it again received a mild shock during the non-co-operation days.

But the happenings of 1856-57 had raised false alarms with regard to the educational system and

those who had disapproved of the principles of the Despatch of 1854 laid at least a part of the responsibility for the Mutiny at its door. The second Education Despatch, of 1859.

Consequently the Home Government examined the working of the Despatch²² "since the measures, and particularly the more recent measures, of Government for the promotion of Education have been alleged to be among the causes which have brought the recent outbreak in the army of Bengal, and the disquietude and apprehension which are believed to have prevailed in some portions of Her Majesty's Indian territories." A Despatch was issued in 1859 which reviewed the working of the previous Despatch and denied the truth of the above allegations. It reiterated the principles

²¹ There was a belief current that most violent changes in the fate of the British in India will occur every hundredth year, e.g., 1757 Plassey ; 1857 Mutiny. Thus the next change according to the then popular belief would not take place till 1957.

²² *Despatch of 1859, Para I.*

and directions contained in the Despatch of 1854 with but one exception. It did not approve of the idea of grants-in-aid in primary education, for the requisition would weigh heavily on the poor people of the community which might create prejudice against education and might also "render the Government itself unpopular."²³ The question of 'prestige' was also involved.²⁴ "There can be no doubt that the dignity of Government is compromised by its officers appearing in the light of importunate, and often unsuccessful applicants for pecuniary contributions for objects which the Government is confessedly very anxious to promote." For this reason vernacular primary education was to be supplied by the direct instrumentality of the Government officers and for its expenses the levy of a cess was recommended.

The Cess.—The Tahsili schools were a direct charge on the provincial revenue, but the Halkabandi schools were maintained by a local cess. Mr. Thomason had originally proposed the creation of a *jagir* in each village for the expenses of the village school, but it was not approved by the Home Authorities. When the Halkabandi system was inaugurated, the zamindars agreed to contribute towards

²³ Ibid., para 49.

²⁴ Ibid., para 49.

educational expenses at the rate of one per cent Voluntary in on their land revenue. In 1850, origin. the Government had agreed to share the burden of the village school equally with the zamindar. This equal sharing of the cost of village education between the landlord and the Government was the peculiarity of the North-Western Province. Rules for the assessment of the cess were laid down in the "Saharanpur Settlement Directions" in which it was prescribed that the Government demand was to be limited to 50 per cent of the net assets of the land, and that the cess was to be deducted *before* the determination of the demand, and thus it fell equally upon the landowner and the state. In theory the contribution was voluntary, but as we shall later see, it was compulsory for all practical purposes. Its theoretical nature, however, made its realization insecure and it was ruled by Mr. Edmonstone, the Lieutenant-Governor, that "the education cess could not be realised compulsorily from the defaulters."²⁵

But other forces were at work which modified and ultimately exploded the fiction of the voluntary nature of the cess. The Educational Despatch of 1859 had enjoined a compulsory local rate as the best means of providing funds for elementary education.

²⁵ Vide G. O. No. 2617A, dated 4th October, 1861, and G. O. No. 2618A, dated 7th October, 1862.

In its view there was to be no voluntary element on the part of the landowner nor the equal sharing of the burden with him by the state, yet in the North-Western Province both these were present. The financial aspect of the question was also important. If the Government was to share half the burden, its contributions would become an intolerable burden to the state by the time the cess was introduced in the whole province.

Thus in 1866, the Government declared that its demand was 55 per cent of the net profits on lands as assessed at the latest Settlement

The cess consolidated in the land revenue. including the cesses (police, road, education, etc.). But no safeguard was made in this consolidated higher demand for the claim of the zamindar to control the proceeds of his share of the cess, which he paid in addition to the original Government demand on land alone. The payment

Its effects. came as directly from his pocket as before. The only change that took place was that whereas formerly the Government was bound to contribute an equal amount, now the fund might consist wholly of the Zamindars' contribution. The voluntary contribution had now attained the status of a tax.

Another aspect of the question was the changed point of view of the subject. So far as the agricultural population was concerned, it ceased to be a local cess paid by the Zamindar, and he began

to look upon the expenditure on the village school as a grant paid by the Government. And for this very reason the Zamindar could not for a moment sustain a claim to a control of such funds.²⁶ Further it lost its local aspect. So far it could be used for the local school only, but henceforward it was imposed for the benefit of the community at large, and could be used for Tahsili and other types of schools. A great connecting link between the Zamindars and village schools was cut off with its inevitable consequences. The fact that the Zamindars acquiesced in this change without a protest showed that they had but a cynical faith in the 'voluntary' nature of the

cess. It was easy to impose a new cess at the time of settlement in areas where settlement is made for fixed periods. But it was difficult to levy it in the permanently settled districts still the cess still voluntary.

ed districts. Still the Zamindars in those districts (four in the Benares Division) agreed to pay half per cent of their revenue payable to Government on the distinct understanding that if they did so, Government would pay the other half per cent. The Government agreed to this in 1866. And thus the Zamindars of the whole province began to pay for the village education.

²⁶ From the Resolution No. 2328A of 1866 of the N. W. P. Government, Para, 5 (Quoted on p. 39 of the *Report of the Education Commission of 1882, N. W. P.*)

The voluntary nature of the cess led to a logical, though unforeseen, demand on the part of many Zamindars to control the fund thus raised. A memorial was presented to the Local Government by the Zamindars of Aligarh under the auspices of the Aligarh Scientific Society, of which Raja Jaikrishna Das was Secretary. A Zamindar himself, with a record of distinguished service in the Mutiny, possessing the confidence of the Government and his fellow-Zamindars, he easily led them. In the memorial they complained that while they paid the cess for expenses of education,²⁷ "it is obviously a hardship that they should not be allowed to take any part in the management of the system, or exercise any control over the disbursements of funds. It is very mortifying to them to find that they are not consulted on any points connected therewith, and that, notwithstanding their having to provide the funds, they know nothing as to the manner and purposes in which these funds are expended." They, therefore, requested that the money which they contribute together with the Government grant should be constituted as a separate educational fund, and "applied solely for the benefit of the people of

²⁷ Petition of landholders of Aligarh (p. 36, N. W. P. Section of the *Report of the Education Committee of 1882*, p. 36).

that district alone from which the contribution is raised.”²⁸ They also asked that “ a committee, consisting of the educational officers and the district landholders and gentlemen, presided over by the Collector of the District or the Commissioner of the Division should be formed for the general control and supervision of the system, and for regulating the expenditure ; and all matters connected with the business of education should be left to the discretion of the committee so constituted.”²⁹

These Zamindars were fairly enlightened and knew their rights and privileges, and it is no wonder that they asserted their claims. But the importance of this memorial lies in the fact that it was the first explicit expression of the desire of a section of the people to share in the management of a branch for which they paid. The constitutional aspect of the demand was significant, and the Government was not slow to see the way in which the wind was blowing. While it hailed “ any movement among the landed gentry towards a more active exercise of the influence which properly belongs to them,” and while it welcomed their ‘ sympathies ’ and ‘ co-operation ’ in the ‘ general administration of affairs,’ it hastened to ‘ correct misapprehension ’ as to their “ right to claim that which, within certain limits

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 37.

and upon other grounds " it was " very willing to concede to them." It further said " The attitude of the Government. that³⁰ " it is urged as a hardship that those who pay for the expenses of education should not be permitted to take any part in the management of the system, or exercise control over the disbursement of the funds ; but the same argument might obviously be used in respect of the Government of the country generally, and the application of the land revenue and other taxes." And while admitting the logical conclusion, the Lieutenant-Governor said " to this there is but one reply : The people must prove their qualification to exercise such rights and responsibilities before they can be admitted to any share in the direct control of the administration of the State ; and it is in furtherance of this object that the means of education are placed at their disposal."³¹ As for the cess, as we have seen above, the Government declared that it would be levied for the general benefit of the community and would be consolidated in the revenue payable to the Government which was fixed at 55 per cent of the net profits on lands. Thus the expenses will be met from the revenue,

³⁰ Resolution No. 2328A of 1866 (Quoted in the *Report of Education Commission of 1882*, N. W. P. Section, pp. 38, 39).

³¹ Ibid.

and so "no claim to any control or management of the funds on the part of the Zamindars could for a moment be sustained."³²

Thus after disposing of the legal aspect of the memorial, the Government realised the necessity of giving "the district officers and the native land-owners and aristocracy generally some voice in the local management of schools, so

Formation of that they might take a more im-
School committees. mediate interest in the well-being of these institutions." It sanctioned, therefore, the formation in certain districts of educational committees, which were later formed in the whole province.

Mr. Thomason had declared that "the Government does not intend to establish schools of its own, but it intends to help the people in establishing schools for themselves."³³ Yet the main demand of the Zamindars, with which they were vitally concerned, was not conceded and an opportunity of enlisting their whole-hearted co-operation was lost. It should, however, be remembered that without financial powers the Education Department could not have obtained or maintained its prestige. Experience has amply demonstrated that inspectors of the

³² Ibid.

³³ R. Thornton: *Memoirs on the Statistics of Indigenous Education within the North-Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency*. Calcutta, 1850, p. 12.

department will lose most of their prestige and usefulness if their financial powers are taken away. A shrewd secretary of a private institution told me that he respected the inspectors solely for their financial power.

The committees thus constituted had no interest for the enlightened Zamindars. Others thought that it was a stratagem to get more

Their failure. money from them. The duties of the members were not defined, and they thought it a useless expense and wasted trouble to journey to the Sudder station to attend a committee meeting. The contempt of some, apathy of others, unwillingness to work together, feelings of pride—all contributed to make the committees difficult to form and more difficult to work. A report complained that the Zamindars of Aligarh, at whose instance these committees were formed, were conspicuous by their lack of interest in them.

In 1871, an Act was passed which authorised an assessed tax for local purposes. A general provincial fund was created and a district committee was created in each

The attitude of new committees. district to control and supervise the expenditure of the amount assigned to that district. This committee appointed several sub-committees, one of which was the 'Education Committee,' which superseded the one formed in 1866. Each of these new education committees had jurisdiction over a district and consisted mostly of Zamindars nomi-

nated by the Government. The committees were given the powers of appointment, dismissal, punishment, etc., of teachers, and were required to maintain school buildings, and prepare a budget for sanction by the Government. The budget was required in detail, and the rules for expenditure were very rigid. The Education Commission Report of 1883 says³⁴ "It is true that in 1874 centralisation had reached its highest development in the North-Western Provinces since the reign of Aurangzeb but the shackles which were then forged for committees require a strong hand to unloose them, and they have not yet worn out." In the opinion of Mr. J. C. Nesfield, inspector of schools, Oudh, they impeded the routine business of the Education Department. They should have been, if anything, controllers of the Executive, but they were entrusted with executive business itself, with responsibility to the Education Department, but with no control of funds. They were utter failures.

Position in 1882.—On the eve of the enquiry by the Education Commission, the North-Western Provinces had 5,329 primary and 455 middle vernacular schools for boys maintained by the Governmental bodies. Beginning with the eight experimental districts in 1850, the Tahsili and Halkabandi systems had been extended to the whole province. It is

³⁴ *Report of the Education Commission of 1882*, N. W. P. Section, p. 119.

impossible to find how many of these were situated in the rural areas. The policy of discouraging aided vernacular schools had succeeded so far that only fifty-six aided primary and seven aided Tahsili middle vernacular schools were in existence. No record was kept of unaided, i.e., indigenous schools. As a rule no fees were levied in primary schools. In these, reading, writing and arithmetic with the elements of history, geography, sanitation and mensuration were taught. In some of these primary schools, boys were taught to read Patwari's (village accountant's) papers. Lower and upper primary examinations, as prescribed by the Government, were held. The departmental middle school examination had become universal for middle schools. The apparatus and equipment were still poor, but the committees had begun to provide buildings for their schools. The registers were now beginning to be kept more correctly and returns were fairly trustworthy. The attendance of boys had also improved. There was a Normal School in each division of the North-Western Provinces (except Kumaon) and one in Oudh at Lucknow. Vernacular middle passed candidates were admitted to them. Thus more efficient teachers were being secured and about fifty per cent of the Halkabandi school teachers were trained. Their salaries varied from Rs. 5 to Rs. 12 per month, and those of the Tahsili (middle) schools from Rs. 10 to Rs. 20.

CHAPTER V

THE EDUCATION COMMISSION OF 1882-83

The Despatch of 1854 had enjoined the Government of India above all, to extend the elementary education of the great mass of the people, who were "utterly incapable of obtaining any education worthy of the name by their own unaided efforts." The higher and secondary education was to take care of itself. The facilities for higher education were considered to be sufficient, and no extension was considered necessary. A system of grants-in-aid was to encourage secondary education, which was not to be provided by the 'direct' instrumentality of the Government. It was even contemplated gradually to transfer the existing Government institutions to private bodies.

The Despatch of 1854 (§41) had announced the willingness of the Home Government to sanction a "considerable increase of expenditure" for the extension of mass education. But it was alleged that the expenditure on higher and secondary education had increased very much, while primary education did not get its proper share as contemplated

How far were the intentions of the despatch of 1854 carried out?

by the Despatch. As Dr. Thomas has shown¹ "Government higher education—excluding the cost of middle schools—was in 1881-82 more expensive by Rs. 5,00,000 than was the whole number of colleges, high schools, and lower schools in existence in 1854." In the North-Western Provinces, while in 1854 the Government was spending Rs. 50,000 for primary education, in 1882 the Government spent Rs. 8,59,512 from the provincial revenue.² But the expenditure from this provincial revenue on middle and primary vernacular education (excluding direction and inspection) was only Rs. 1,30,380 or about 15 per cent of the total Government contribution. The Government spent more (Rs. 85,110) on the English primary schools for boys (which were mostly in towns) than they did (Rs. 69,319) for Vernacular primary schools which were mostly in rural areas. Thus while the Despatch had contemplated that Government would devote the largest amount of its educational expenditure on the education of the masses, in the North-Western Provinces, actually only 15 per cent was spent on it. The type of education which was to become self-supporting, was drawing more and more on Government resources. Univer-

¹ F. W. Thomas, *The History and Prospects of British Education in India*, p. 100.

² Education Commission of 1882. *Report on N. W. Provinces*, p. 129g.

sity education alone cost the Government only a little less (Rs. 1,20,570) than primary education. This was a flagrant violation of the spirit of the Despatch.

But it was not the expenditure on education that attracted attention so much as the slow progress of education. In 1870-71 the number of children in schools in India was nearly 1,900,000 but in India in 1882-83 it was 2,650,000, i.e., there was an annual increase of about 70,000. But the average annual increase in children of school-going-age was 200,000.³ This meant that the *proportion* of children not at school was increasing. Moreover the Government schools on account of their better buildings, better equipment and staff were more efficient and attractive and cost more than non-Government schools. It was difficult for the latter to compete against the former.

The people who were hit hardest by the policy of Government were the missionaries. Here and there some Indian-managed institutions had sprung up, but the bulk of the privately managed schools consisted of mission schools. In competition with Indian-managed schools they were (and they even now are) in a much better position for monopolising private educational institutions on account of their European and American direction, superior organisation, stable funds and prestige. They had looked

³ F. W. Thomas, *The History and Prospects of British Education in India*, p. 102, London, 1891.

forward to the time when they would become heir to the Government institutions, which alone stood in their way of becoming almost the sole directors of higher educational agencies at the time. The missionaries complained of the hostility of the department and set up an agitation against it first in India, but finding this not very successful, they began it in England. In 1878 an organisation called the General Council on Education in India was started in London. It counted among its members Lord Halifax, the author of the Despatch of 1854, and many other eminent people. The Rev. James Johnston was its secretary. The sympathy of various influential people was secured, and when Lord Ripon was nominated Viceroy of India in 1880, the Council presented him with an address in which complaints with regard to the working of the Despatch of 1854 were made. In reply he promised to investigate the matter. It was thus that the Education Commission of 1882 was appointed with Sir William Hunter as its President.

Appointment of the Education Commission of 1882. The missionaries were well represented on the Commission and it also included Indians like Sir Bhudeb Mukerji and Justice Mahmud.

The Commission aroused widespread interest in the country and it examined 193 witnesses and received 323 memorials. As might be expected, the vocal Indian section which had profited by English education, whose demands and needs it had mainly

supplied, championed the cause of higher education. In the North-Western Provinces men like Raja Bhinga, Sir Syed Ahmad, Raja Jaikrishna Das, Babu Harish Chandra, Raja Siva Prasad, Mr. J. C. Nesfield gave evidence. The evidence brought out certain facts very prominently in connection with the education of the masses. One of them was the decline of indigenous education. The other was the language difficulty. The poverty of the people was given as a cause of the slow progress of primary education by many witnesses. The literary classes, while praising the virtue of spreading education among the masses, in effect advocated the old filtration theory.

The Commission brought out a very long report dealing with the entire educational system of the country. But we are concerned

Recommendations of the Commission.

here with primary education only. The Commission recommended "that primary education be regarded as the instruction of the masses, through the vernacular, in such subjects as will best fit the students for their position in life, and be not necessarily regarded as a portion of instruction leading up to the University" (IV. I.)⁴. It meant a course of instruction complete in itself, through the medium of the mother-tongue which might not be made a

⁴ Figures in Roman refer to chapters and those in Arabic refer to the numbers of recommendations of the Commission.



RAJA SIVA PRASAD, C.S.I.

*First Indian Inspector of Schools in the North-Western
Provinces of Agra and Oudh.*

stepping stone for higher instruction. The elementary school were to be primary and not preparatory schools. In the North-Western Provinces this was recognised by the fact that the elementary courses of Vernacular and Anglo-vernacular schools were (and they still are) different. The most important of the recommendations which dealt with the principles of educational policy, ran as follows: "That, while every branch of education may justly claim the fostering care of the state, it is desirable in the present circumstances of the country to declare the elementary education of the masses, its provision, extension and improvement, to be that part of the education system to which strenuous efforts of the state should now be directed in still larger measure than heretofore." (IV. 3.) It was in fact the reiteration of the policy of the Despatch of 1854, which it also confirmed in its financial aspect by the following recommendation: "That primary education be declared to be that part of the whole system of public instruction which possesses an almost exclusive claim upon local funds set apart for education, and a large claim on provincial revenues." (IV. 28.) The Government of India declared their full accord with these views. The more enthusiastic heads of provinces thought that the recommendations of the commission bore the marks of compromise and did not go far enough. They did not like the qualification of "present circumstances" or the reference to the claims of other

types of education. In the North-Western Provinces, Views of the however, Sir Alfred Lyall, the North-Western Provincial Lieutenant-Governor, held a different Government. ent view. In his opinion secondary and primary were equally important. People of his way of thinking held that secondary education was sure to suffer if the state became slack and hence it should have equal claims on the Government. With this view the bulk of Indian opinion concurred. And so long as the view was backed by the pressure of the middle (literary) classes, who benefited by secondary education, there was no danger that it was likely to suffer at the expense of primary education, the Commission's recommendation notwithstanding.

The definition by the Commission of the primary schools required a revision of the curriculum in order to make it self-sufficient and to include "practical subjects" in it. (IV. 9.) Physical training was recommended to be promoted by "the encouragement of native games, gymnastics, school drill and other exercises." (IV. 12.) The question of fees in primary schools was complicated. It was not intended to give free primary education, not even to the children of those who paid education rate. So far as the North-Western Provinces were concerned the policy with regard to fees was a retrograde step for the primary education was practically free in them. The primary schools in rural areas were to be managed by the district boards which were created under

the new Local Self-Government Act. But in order to secure continuity of policy and some sort of departmental control, it was recommended that the district boards should adopt the "rules prescribed by the department for aiding such schools and introduce no change therein without the sanction of the department." (IV. 36.) Only such teachers as were certified and approved by the department, were to be appointed by the boards. Their promotion or removal was to be approved by the department. (IV. 33.) The indigenous schools were to be recognized and encouraged if they "serve any purpose of secular education whatsoever." (III. 1.)

Thus primary education was to claim local funds exclusively and also a large part of provincial funds for education. The curriculum was to be adapted to the needs of the people, and indigenous schools were to be encouraged. Special efforts were to be made for educating backward classes. In the North-

Western Provinces, however, the

commission was led to believe that
 Its special re-commendations for the North-Western Provinces. "both from high and primary instruction, the classes who by

tradition and national consent rank highest in the estimation of the people are practically excluded."⁵ And the Commission

⁵ N. W. P., p. 130. (*Report of the Education Commission of 1882*, N. W. P. Vol.)

thought that it was this class which needed encouragement. They believed that Halkabandi schools were intended to be "primary schools for the sons of zamindars." And "the children of the other classes, if they attend these schools, should be made, and no doubt will be made, to pay adequate fees."⁶ They, therefore, recommended "the restriction of Halkabandi schools for a time to the sons of zamindars,"⁷ and hoped that "the indigenous schools aided by grants from the district committees will provide all the instruction needed by the great mass of the people."⁸ The children in these schools were to pay fees as usual, but "the sons of the very poor" might receive free tuition at the expense of the local boards.

This was an indirect way of applying the old 'filtration' theory, and was also a concession to the aristocracy and the Musalmans, who did not like to send their children to the same school to which those of the village carpenter and cobbler went. The all-levelling Western system was much too severe upon these people and the Commission, in its eagerness to educate them, recommended a course which, though well-intentioned, would have been a blow to the spread of education. It was not possible for a village to maintain two schools,

⁶ Ibid., p. 132.

⁷ Ibid., p. 137.

⁸ Ibid., p. 132.



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6. Primary School, Bithur [Cawnpore]. Built before 1870.
7. Primary School, Ajitmal [Etawah]. Built before 1860 by Mr. A. O. Hume.
8. A new type of Primary School Building, Farrukhabad District.
9. The Primary School at Pachchaiyan Gaon [Etawah]. It has village post office and an annexe which houses a dispensary.
10. A Kuchcha Primary School Building, Musanagar [Cawnpore].

one for the upper and the other for the lower classes. Had the recommendation been acted upon, the schools where the latter could go would have almost disappeared in a decade.

Coming back to the general recommendations of the Commission, we find that most of their recommendations had been more or less anticipated by some province or other. The Commission, in effect reiterated the policy of the Despatch of 1854, but the Report served to awaken public interest in education and caused an examination of the achievements in the field of education since the beginning of the British rule. It is strange that, considering the magnitude of the task before the country for eliminating illiteracy and for the spread of higher education, they recommended only an increase of ten lakhs of rupees in the annual budget for education. The progress might be steady, but it was sure to be very slow.

CHAPTER VI

PROGRESS AFTER THE COMMISSION OF 1882

The Commission of 1882 stimulated educational activities. Their recommendations, though not of a revolutionary character, were calculated to advance the pace of progress. In 1883 the Local Self-Government Act, Lord Ripon's monumental piece of legislation, was passed, and primary education in rural areas was now supplied with a foster-father in the form of the district board. The district boards (which were created in 1885) superseded the old district committees. They were the first step in training Indians in self-government, where almost apathetic members, altogether new to this strange form of government, were to be tutored by the district officers. The Act (XIV of 1883) required the boards to provide for the establishment, management and maintenance of schools in rural areas so far as their finances permitted them. The Government asked them 'to observe and act in accordance with the general principles of administration which the Government has from time to time laid down in regard to several departments handed over to local control.' (Resolu-

tion of 25th February, 1885.) At the same time it encouraged them to use their discretion within these limits. This safeguard was considered necessary to ensure a continuity of policy, and it was with this object again that in certain matters departmental sanction was made obligatory. But they had no

separate funds for education. The old district committees had obtained specific funds for education from provincial revenues. Under the new regulations the newly created boards depended mostly upon local rates and revenues of transferred services. The deficiency was to be made up by a lump grant from the provincial funds. The unexpended balances (contrary to the recommendation of the Commission) were to lapse to the Government. As no fresh impetus to trade or agriculture was given, their revenue from local sources was not likely to increase. Thus the possibility of expansion was not very great, at least in the immediate future. But the expense had at once increased. The subordinate inspecting staff was made a charge on the boards which were further required to pay a proportionate share of the cost of the higher inspecting staff.

The district boards were expected to stimulate local interest in education (and other transferred subjects) as they were given some

responsibility. Judging from this point of view, they were not very

Their financial difficulties.

Their lack of interest in Education.

successful. In 1897 a Report says¹ " Their (the boards') zeal for education is generally that of the Collector or Deputy Commissioner, who is their official chairman. In fact they are often content to be mere ciphers, except when any matter of the nature of patronage comes up." In 1897 the Chairman of the Etah Board drew up a scheme by which each member was made responsible for a fixed number of schools. But evidently it did not work long. The schools were so much accustomed to flourish on official effort and patronage that whenever they lacked it, they suffered appreciably. Mr. Fuller, Magistrate of Allahabad, said,² " A very potent cause of poor attendance and poor instruction is the lack of interest on the part of tahsildars and subdivisional officers which entails lack of interest on the part of the people themselves." The sham nature of ' popular interest ' could not be better and more tersely put. Even after fifteen years' existence the boards had not much improved. The Report on Public Instruction for 1900 says,³ " It cannot be said that district boards as a whole are showing more

¹ *Report on Public Instruction in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh* (1896-97), p. 9.

² *Ibid.*, p. 66.

³ *Report on Public Instruction in the N. W. P.* (1899-1900), p. 7.

interest in education." And again in 1901,⁴ " During the year, with scarcely an exception they (the members) never go inside a school, but when the annual educational proposals for the district come up they are not ashamed to express their opinion freely regarding the work of teachers. They are the constituted champions of the teachers against the Education department, and they regularly exert all the influence they can to protect them from well-merited punishment." This was not a healthy relation between the members of the district boards and the department. The love of exercise of power, without corresponding zeal and thoughtfulness, was the cause of this attitude of the members. For the most part they were, in rural areas, men of little or no education, and had become members on account of their position. They could not be expected to care much for education of the people. Non-official members who took an interest in education were found on the municipal (town) boards, which had a larger proportion of educated members.

The financial handicap of the district boards had its adverse effect on primary schools. There were limited funds, but teachers' salaries had to be increased, and so it was proposed by many boards to abolish some Halkabandi schools and to utilise

⁴ *Report on Public Instruction in N. W. P. (1900-1901)*, p. 6.

the savings in raising the pay of deserving teachers.⁵ In the upper primary sections, fees were also increased. As a result the number of primary schools and pupils decreased as shown below⁶ :—

	Schools.	Pupils.
1886-87	4,978	171,812
1891-92	4,185	147,714

The average cost of educating a pupil had in the meantime increased from Rs. 3-4 to Rs. 4.⁷

When reviewing the Education Report of 1894, Sir Anthony MacDonell, the Lieutenant-Governor of the province said that :

Sir A. MacDonell
on the Depressed
State of Mass
Education.

- (1) The number of pupils receiving education of the simplest form was, relatively to the population, less than in any other province.
- (2) The total expenditure on education from public funds was small relatively to the aggregate provincial and local revenues, and that of this expenditure an undue proportion was devoted to secondary and English education.

⁵ *Report on Public Instruction in N. W. P.* (1892-93), p. 49.

⁶ *Progress of Education in India* (1887-88 to 1891-92), Calcutta, 1893, pp. 139 and 140.

⁷ Government Resolution on the *N. W. P. Education Report* for 1894-95.

- (3) The average cost of each child under instruction was excessive.
- (4) The training provided for teachers by means of normal schools was altogether insufficient.

In conclusion he proposed as a general principle 'to popularise education while making it more economical' in order "to wipe out the reproach of ignorance attached to these provinces."⁸ He undertook to increase the Government grant for primary education "to the utmost extent of its financial capacity," which turned out to be Rs. 75,000! Small as this grant was, the boards could use only about two-thirds of the sum in the whole year! With the object of extending primary education of the simplest character, it was decided to change the policy followed hitherto of discouraging private schools. Henceforth private schools and persons undertaking to open new schools were to be given grants-in-aid. This policy led to a revival of primary school activity. The number of primary schools at once increased and in 1897, they numbered 6,025. The number of board schools also increased and private schools were brought within the scope of the grant-in-aid rules. In the Allahabad district there was an increase of 50 per cent in the number of boys

⁸ Ibid.

receiving primary instruction. The report of the Jaunpur District Board said that the new system filled a want, while the report of the Ghazipore District Board observed that the new schools "have supplied a real want, and at a small cost the school population has been nearly doubled."⁹ In 1898 an additional grant of Rs. 5,400 was made for the same purpose. But by 1902, the departmental authorities were convinced that the new aided schools were opened or aided with greater zeal than discretion by the district boards. The schools to which I refer are not to be confused with the indigenous schools, which had either been killed by the competition of board schools, or could not be brought under the grant-in-aid rules on account of their inadaptability. The new aided schools were simply inferior board schools, with all their faults but without their prestige, equipment, efficiency and financial stability. Most of them were very inefficient, meagrely attended, poorly housed, and their teachers were paid hardly a living wage. Their main source of income was the grant of Rs. 3 or Rs. 4 per month. Thus the method of improving these schools was to give them larger grants to enable them to employ better teachers.

It is a pertinent question to ask why it was that

⁹ *Report on Public Instruction N. W. P.*, 1896-97, pp. 72-73.

private enterprise did not succeed in rural areas so well as it did in the case of Anglo-vernacular schools in towns?

The reason is not far to seek. The Anglo-vernacular schools were opened for and by those classes who wanted that kind of education, whereas the primary schools were opened by others for those who did not care for them.

Causes of failure
of Private Schools
in Rural Areas.

The causes of their indifference will be considered later. Another reason was the fact that Anglo-vernacular schools, being in towns, had the advantage of better managers, better supervision and more public interest than was available in the case of primary schools in villages.

The character of the primary schools, had crystallised by 1892. The education given was divided

into two parts : upper and lower primary. The latter standard was two years above the infant class and the upper one two years beyond the lower. In the upper primary section, mensuration, a handbook of rent, revenue law and the geography of India, Asia and Europe were taught as compulsory subjects, in addition to the vernaculars and arithmetic. The promotions were made from class to class by yearly examinations. The upper and lower primary examinations were held by the Deputy Inspector or his assistant in a centre. Some of the

Condition of
primary (Halka-
bandi) schools at
the end of the last
century.

teachers were overworked and in 1896 it was decided to restrict instruction to the lower primary standard in schools with one teacher. Surely, it was more than enough for a teacher to manage two infant and two primary classes at a time. Up to that time, only the mind of the child had received attention, but now attention was given to his body, and school drill was introduced, for which special arrangements were made at normal schools to train teachers in it. The unattractive schools at last found a subject which filled boys with enthusiasm, and many of the boys showed it by voluntarily buying cheap uniforms. Some district authorities discouraged this enthusiasm, perhaps not knowing its value. In 1900 drawing and agriculture were introduced as compulsory subjects in the primary course only to be taken out shortly after.

In this period greater attention was given to the employment of trained teachers, and by 1902 their percentage had become 39. School buildings and equipment were also improved. A standard design for village schools was approved and 8 square feet were allowed for each pupil. A tendency to supply a house for the teacher also began to become popular. The inspectors were instructed to note the condition of school buildings. But still the housing especially of private or aided schools, was in a very unsatisfactory condition.

As the sole criterion of a teacher's success in work was the examination result, which under the

centre system¹⁰ could only be of a mechanical nature, boys were generally crammed. In spite of reports from inspectors not much could be done to improve the methods. The use of 'keys' and other aids was prohibited, but with little success.

The middle schools which served as a means of higher instruction in the rural areas had also declined, but with the help of a special grant, they had also recovered in 1902. The following table shows the chequered career of these middle schools :—

Years	Schools	Boys	Average number of boys per school
1886-87	468	42,237	90
1891-92	333	30,090	90
1896-97	297	31,769	107
1901-02	301	40,732	135

By 1901, the middle schools had decreased in number, but the survivors were gaining strength. Their efficiency, in the form of better teachers, better housing, better equipment and better results, had increased. Boys were willing to attend them

¹⁰ The promotion examinations in primary schools were given first by Assistant and then by Deputy and Sub-Deputy Inspectors. The children of a dozen schools or more were collected at a convenient centre where they were examined. This was known as the centre system of examinations.

because no service carrying a salary of Rs. 10 per month could be obtained without at least passing the Vernacular Middle Examination. In fact middle classes were so popular that many primary school teachers trained in a normal school found it convenient and paying to add to their schools middle sections, which were well attended and showed quite good results at the public examination. But the results were obtained at the cost of neglecting the primary classes, and for this reason, the department discouraged the practice.

The vernacular middle schools had by the end of the 19th century established their position to such an extent that many people believed that the standard in them was a good deal higher than in the Anglo-vernacular middle schools. The reason was that in the latter, boys had to study more subjects. English took up most of their time, and the vernaculars were entrusted to the least competent teachers.

By the end of the century, two things were clear. Primary education had yet not reached the masses.

Masses reached.	not	The great majority attending village schools were of the higher and middle and not of the lower castes.
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The Education Report of 1892-93 regretted the fact that "the ultimate substratum, the actual tillers of the soil, remain absolutely untouched. The classes who attend our village schools are Brahmans, Kshattris, Bunias, Kayasths and Muhammadans with occasionally a few Kalwars and

others of kindred castes. Ahirs, Chamars, etc., are still in utter darkness."

But even without a mass movement for education, the existing demand was difficult to meet. In

the Education Report of 1902, the
Need for funds. needs of the department were summarised as follows:—

More primary schools.

More trained teachers, that is, more normal schools.

Higher salaries for teachers.

Better, and better kept school buildings.

More district inspecting staff.

In other words, there was plenty of room for extension, provided money could be found for it; the need of funds was urgent.

CHAPTER VII

ERA OF IMPROVEMENT

No foreign rule in India before the British had so profoundly affected the social, political and economic life of the people. The

Social and Economic changes in Villages at the end of the last century.

highly organised government of the British, helped by the introduction of railways, posts, telegraphs, press, and the blessing of peace began to move the people at a speed hitherto unknown in the country. The new luxuries in the form of foreign goods created new standards of living and produced new demands. A great change in the manners, habits and tastes of the people was taking place. The change was felt even in villages. Whereas formerly people would not dare to build a 'pucca' (burnt brick or stone) house in a village, or use costly dress, even if they could afford and liked it, for fear of attracting the attention of thieves, thugs or tyrant rulers, they now began to spend more for the sake of appearance. The novelty of the foreign imports attracted them. As an inspector of schools remarked in 1892¹: "Men spend more than they used to

¹ *Progress of Education in India*, Calcutta, 1892, p. 142.

do for the sake of appearance in public, and what they now buy are not the country-made stuffs, which are coarse, but very durable, but the thinner and less durable materials, which come from England and which, though bought at a cheaper rate, are more expensive in the end, because they do not last so long. Men are not contented, as they once were, with the country oil for light during the night. They are acquiring a preference for kerosene oil. This oil is a temptation because it is cheaper, but it leads to the additional cost of a lamp of some kind in which such oil can be burnt. In the public festivals or holidays there is more competition for display of every kind, and this of course entails more expenditure. Men are beginning to use shoes and umbrellas who formerly considered such articles quite unnecessary. . . . Men are under greater temptation to travel. Litigation grows apace, which is rather favoured than otherwise by the facilities held out by the courts. . . . In villages the only industry worth considering is agriculture, and in this the same competition has sprung up as in other directions. Land lets at a higher rent than it formerly did." Thus expenses of the people were increasing, but the increase in their income did not keep pace with them. As a matter of fact the competition of foreign goods coupled with the higher prices of the necessities of life, hit the artisans hard, and many of them found the ancestral industries unprofitable. Thus they were thrown into agriculture where they

increased competition, or into government service. Thus, while on one hand people spent so much on necessities, new comforts and conventionalities that they had little margin left for spending on things like education, on the other the unprofitable cottage

industries and severe competition in agriculture drove them to government service in which they had better prospects if they were educated. Thus while the people were unwilling to pay for education, some of them did demand it.

But the economic and social changes referred to above assisted by an unpractical form of higher education operating throughout the

last fifty years of the nineteenth century created a vague discontent among the people. The results of the education both in quality as

well as quantity, gave dissatisfaction. Although the North-Western Provinces had a good start, it was behind all the other provinces in India in literacy and in the percentage of children at school. The funds at the disposal of the Education department in the province were always so meagre that much extension was not possible. And whenever more funds were provided, a corresponding increase in the number of boys and schools resulted, as for instance, in 1895. The Directors of Public Instruction referred to this state of affairs in

They created demand of Education in certain sections.

Slow progress of Education in the North-Western Provinces.



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11. Primary School, Kachara [Fatehpur].
The building was put up by the villagers.
12. An ordinary type of house which is rented for a Primary School in villages [Cawnpore].
13. A hut put up by a Hindu Sadhu (Faquir) for a Primary School [Etawah].
14. A Sub-Deputy Inspector's inspection of a Primary School [Cawnpore District].
15. A link with the past. A Primary School in Allahabad District.

report after report, but it was only a cry in the wilderness. Commenting on a Lack of funds. grant of five lakhs from the Imperial Government in 1903, Mr. Lewis, then Director of Public Instruction, wrote²: "Already at the bottom of the list with regard to public expenditure on education per unit of population, the United Provinces have now received less in proportion to population than any other province. Hence, other provinces have by the favour of the Government of India been allowed to increase their lead. It is therefore the misfortune rather than the fault of these provinces that they are last of all in educational progress." The step-motherly treatment meted out to the United Provinces by the Government of India can be illustrated by a single instance. In 1905, it gave special grants for education to the provinces. The United Provinces got the least (Rs. five lakhs) in proportion to its population. The Report said³: "Of all large divisions of India, the United Provinces remain the least favoured, receiving only Rs. 80 per thousand of the population for expenditure on education. At the other end of the scale stands Bombay, which finds Rs. 245 per thousand of population for the same purpose." And

² *Report on Public Instruction in the North-Western Provinces* (1902-03), p. 3.

³ *Report on Public Instruction in the United Provinces* (1904-05) p. 4.

this too when in 1902 Bombay had 33·7 per 1,000 of its male population in the primary stage against 13·1 in the United Provinces. It was not the lack of money that was responsible for the indifference of the Government towards educational needs. A hope was expressed that,⁴ "the annually recurring surplus to which we are becoming accustomed in the Indian budgets gives hope that in the course of time it may be quite possible to grant these contributions from that source without additional taxation, wherever the Local Governments have, against their will, to plead *non possumus* to the reasonable demands of the people whose welfare is in their charge." Thus one of the obstacles to the proper extension of primary education in the United Provinces has been lack of funds, in the beginning due to an unwillingness of the Government of India, and later due to financial stringency and the need for economy. The fact that the existing demands (whatever they were) were not satisfied was evident from the reports of educational officers. After Sir Anthony MacDonell's grant of Rs. 50,000 the number of boys in primary schools increased from 148,000 in 1892 to 207,000 at the end of quinquennium ending in 1902, and in 1903, owing to a grant from the Imperial Government, their number increased by 48,461 in one year. The Director wrote that the backward state of these provinces was not so much

⁴ Ibid.

due to an indifference on the part of the people to education as to an absence of facilities for obtaining it. "It has nowhere been complained"⁵ wrote Mr. Lewis, "that scholars could not readily be found for the new schools, but on the contrary, the general cry from the districts has been, and still is, for more money to enable the boards to open more new schools." Whatever might have been the condition in other parts of India, in the United Provinces there was a demand⁶ "for more schools and more schools," but they could not be opened because the funds were exhausted. Mr. Lewis felt this state of affairs so keenly that he wrote,⁷ "when a people cries out for education and cannot get it, we may well, with Carlyle, count it a tragedy."

The local Government admitted that "the rural population is showing signs of a desire for a more extended system of lower primary instruction, of a very simple character."⁸ But it frankly confessed that it had 'not the funds fully to meet that growing desire.'⁹ It counselled the exten-

The department
and aided schools.

sion of aided schools, which it considered cheap and for the time

⁵ *Report on Public Instruction in the North-Western Provinces* (1902-03), p. 27.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁸ Government Resolution on the *Report on Public Instruction in the United Provinces* (1903-04), para. 14.

⁹ *Ibid.*

being efficient means of meeting it. But in the United Provinces the tradition had been to concentrate on officially-managed schools. The department was of opinion that the aided schools were so inefficient that they lowered the standard of primary education. It considered that their increase was an improvement on paper only.¹⁰ The Report of 1902 said that 'a grant is treated as a charitable dole rather than a business-like expenditure for an educational object.'¹¹ The obvious remedy was to make the grant-in-aid rules more stringent and to make inspection more effective. The latter required money for the employment of a larger staff, and in 1903 the grant-in-aid rules were revised and made more stringent. The condition of the aided schools improved. But the tendency was to use them as a cheap way of testing if in a particular place schools were really needed. If they succeeded they were provided with buildings and converted into board schools. The boards and the department had so much control over them that the Government complained that the aided schools were turned into 'a sort of inferior board schools, with the result, in several instances, that zamindars and others have withdrawn their support from an institution which

¹⁰ In 1902 the Director practically recommended the withdrawal of aid to private schools begun by Sir A. Macdonell.

¹¹ *Report on Public Instruction in the North-Western Provinces* (1901-02), p. 19.

the boards have taken over in everything but name.'¹² The Government considered them cheap. They were really so cheap that the cost of educating a boy had been brought down from Rs. 4-2 for boys (and Rs. 4-6 for boys and girls) in 1891-92 before the introduction of aided schools to Rs. 3-2 for boys (and Rs. 3-5 for boys and girls) and Rs. 3-6 for boys (and Rs. 4-1 for boys and girls) in 1897 and 1902 respectively. But this was not good for the teacher of board schools, because it affected his pay. The presence of a large number of 'soft' and inferior schools tended to lower the standard of the board schools.

The discontent as to the quality of education was vague for quite a long time. The hard work for examinations required from boys in conditions which defy all hygienic rules,¹³ spoilt their health especially in middle schools. And once they drank of the pleasures of a literary

Criticism of the
type of Education
given.

¹² Government Resolution on the *U. P. Education Report* of 1904, para, 15.

¹³ When I was Head Master of Municipal Normal School in Allahabad, I discovered that the head teacher of the Model Middle School made the boys work till about 1 a.m. every night. The heat was intense on those days, and these boys were expected to be present in school at 6-30 a.m. every day. They used cheap lamps of kerosene oil and inhaled the smoke in addition to straining their eyes. I tried to persuade the head teacher to shorten their vigils, but he said that if he did so his results would be unsatisfactory.

life, they began to dislike the manual work of their ancestral crafts and professions. The boy who went to school was lost to his paternal vocation. As early as 1892, an inspector said that,¹⁴ "it has been found, and very naturally, that boys who work for the Upper Primary Examination, and who therefore remain at school till they are from 13 to 15 years of age, are not merely averse to field labour, but physically unfit for it. Not one in a hundred of such boys can get literary employment. So they stay idling at home, and many parents have seen reason to regret that they ever sent their sons to school." Thus the complaints against the educational system were that it had an injurious effect on the health of boys, and that the curriculum was too literary and did not suit their environment. The alarming increase in the number of seekers of jobs of a literary nature set many people thinking. This discontent at last found an expression in a memorial which some influential people of the province submitted to the local Government in 1899, in which they complained of the unsuitability of the curriculum and of the effect of the system on the health of pupils. The Government, therefore, appointed a committee with Mr. D. T. Roberts (a civilian) as chairman

Early attempts to improve the curriculum of Rural Schools.

¹⁴ *Progress of Education in India* (1887-88 to 1891-92), Calcutta, 1893, p. 142.

to consider and report on the defects in the school courses that had been brought to the notice of Government. This was the first occasion on which a systematic attempt was made to examine the curriculum and to adapt it to the needs of the people. So far there had been no difference between the curriculum of the urban and that of the rural school. It was now felt that some teaching of agriculture was necessary in order to give a rural bias to education in rural areas. It was also realised that the training of hand and eye had been altogether neglected. Accordingly the committee recommended¹⁵ the introduction of agriculture and drawing as compulsory subjects in the primary courses. The addition of two new subjects would have made the course very heavy. At the same time it was felt that the course in arithmetic was more than necessary for the needs of the pupils and was not well graduated. It was, therefore, lightened and was more uniformly graduated in the curriculum. Up till then the school-day had lasted for five or more hours for all classes, and in some cases no break was allowed for hours together. The Roberts Committee recommended that the working day in the lower primary and preparatory sections should be limited to three hours, and that continuous instruction in any school

¹⁵ *Report on Public Instruction in the North-Western Provinces* (1901-02), p. 17.

for more than three hours should be forbidden. Thus the reform in the curriculum had begun, and the principle that schools should be adapted to the environments of the pupils recognised.

This period of stock-taking, and a recognition of the growing educational needs of the province were followed by the great impetus given to the cause of education by the re-forming zeal and new vitality imported into the Government of India by Lord Curzon. His Government resolution of 1904 on education was a recognition of the fact that the educational needs of the country had not been adequately met and that they needed fresh impetus and increased interest and help of the state. The Government Resolution of 1904 repeated in the usual official language, what had been constantly repeated since 1854, that Government "fully accept the proposition that the active extension of primary education is one of the most important duties of the state," and that they undertake it "because as Lord Lawrence observed in 1868 'among all the sources of difficulty in our administration, and of possible danger to the stability of our government, there are few so serious as the ignorance of the people.' " This, when translated from the official language of the secretariat, represented the old point of view of the civil administrator that it was desirable to educate people

Lord Curzon's
Resolution on Edu-
cation of 1904.

in order to facilitate administration. It is strange to think that even fifty years after Mr. Thomason's death, a man of Lord Curzon's ability seriously said in this Resolution that "a most useful course of instruction may be given in the [village] accountants' papers, enabling every boy before leaving school to master the intricacies of the village accounts and to understand the demands that may be made upon the cultivator." The experience of half-a century had not made them realise that the Patwari's papers were far too complex for the village children who seldom stayed in schools beyond the age of 11 years. For the rest, the Resolution deplored the condition and rate of progress of primary education, and it admitted, what was too obvious to observers, that "the Government of India cannot avoid the conclusion that primary education has hitherto received insufficient attention and an inadequate share of public funds," and that "they consider that it possesses a strong claim upon the sympathy both of the Supreme Government and of the Local Governments, and should be made a leading charge upon provincial revenues; and that in those provinces where it is in a backward condition, its encouragement should be a primary obligation." The United Provinces, where only nine per cent of the boys of school-age were in school as against twenty-two and twenty-three in Bombay and Bengal respectively, needed this encouragement more than any other province. It has already been noted that it got the

least in proportion to its population and certainly less than was adequate for its needs. But the net result was that although in 1907, Rs. 12,81,311 were spent on primary education from provincial and local fund revenues against Rs. 9,46,786 in 1902, the percentage of expenditure on primary education had fallen from about 36·7 per cent of the total expenditure in 1902 to 26·0 per cent in 1907 (the total including local and municipal funds expenditure on education in the province from the provincial revenue being Rs. 25,78,350 in 1902 and Rs. 49,27,654 in 1907). Thus it was that the Resolution was translated into action, so far as the United Provinces were concerned. But in spite of this, the number of pupils in primary schools showed a rise of 101,781 from 1902 to 1907. The improvement was not only in quantity but in quality also, for the special grant made by the Supreme Government enabled the department to raise the pay of the teachers, which rise not only encouraged the existing staff, but also attracted better men to the profession. But even after this rise the minimum salary fixed by the Government was Rs. 8 per month, with benefits from a provident fund for those who drew Rs. 10 and upwards. Many had to be contented with the minimum. They had to wait till 1913 when, thanks to another Government of India Resolution, the minimum was raised to Rs. 12 per month.



THE HON. MR. GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE, C.I.E.

CHAPTER VIII

TOWARDS COMPULSION

The viceroyalty of Lord Curzon saw the first violent agitation of modern India. The general awakening of the people and the

Effect of Politics on Education. dawn of political consciousness

could not ignore the state of education of the country. From the platform of social and caste conferences and the Indian National Congress the demand for extension of education was made. Primary education also came in for much attention, and with the growth of the ideals of nationalism its importance began to be realised. In his presidential address to the Benares session of the Congress in 1905, Mr. G. K. Gokhale said: "What we emphatically insist on is that the resources of the country should be primarily devoted to the work of qualifying the people by means of education and in other ways for such advance."¹ And the fourth of the four

¹ *Speeches of Gopal Krishna Gokhale*, Madras, 1916, p. 698.

reforms that he advocated was "the adoption of measures calculated to improve the condition of the mass of the people ; these include a vigorous extension of primary education."² Thus in the following period the extension of primary education began to be demanded, among others, for political reasons also. This brought the politician into the field, and the discussion of the topic was introduced into the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils. After an agitation for several years in the country, Mr. Gokhale introduced for the first time in 1910 his Elementary Education Bill in which he recommended that a beginning should be made in the direction of free and compulsory education, and that a commission should be appointed to frame definite proposals. His scheme was to confer powers upon local bodies to make elementary education compulsory in their areas ; compulsion was to be for boys only, of between six and ten years of age. In order to guard against premature compulsion he suggested that it should be introduced only in those areas where 33 per cent of boys of school-going age were already at school. Education, if compulsory, was to be free and the extra cost was to be borne by the Government and the local bodies respectively in the ratio of 2 to 1. The bill created a great stir in the country, and numerous meetings were held in its support. The Government, while sympathising

² Ibid., p. 705

with its object, opposed it on the ground that there was yet plenty of room for work on a voluntary basis, since the schools were filled as soon as they were opened, thus showing that the need of the situation was not compulsion, but more schools. Government also argued that even the existing education in primary schools in India on the whole was very inefficient, and that if education was made compulsory, thereby suddenly increasing the number of schools, it would become worse. The prohibitive cost of the scheme was also cited. Some non-officials objected to the educational tax which would have to be levied by the boards to meet their share of extra cost. Mr. Gokhale argued that compulsion also meant that the local bodies must be required to provide the necessary educational facilities for children that should be at school. The argument of efficiency in primary education did not appeal to him much. He said, "Those who raise these objections ignore what is the primary purpose of mass education. It is to banish illiteracy from the land. The quality of education is a matter of importance that comes only after illiteracy has been banished. Now, the primary purpose being to banish illiteracy, teachers who could teach a simple curriculum of the three R's, and houses hired, or voluntarily placed by owners at the disposal of school authorities, must do for the present. . . . of course I do not deprecate the value and importance of the trained teachers and decent school houses ; but I say that

we cannot wait till all these defects are first put right before taking up the question of banishing illiteracy from the land."³

The leaders were moved by a firm faith in the virtues of the simple three R's, and thought simple literacy imperative for the betterment of the country. But there was another school of opinion also—consisting of officials (outside the Education Department) and non-officials which laid too much emphasis on the informative value of primary education. The two schools were present in the United Provinces also. In his Report the Director of Public Instruction, Sir Claude de la Fosse, said: "One set of opinions would utilize the schools for the dissemination of useful information, on such subjects as agriculture, sanitation, malaria, plague, hydrophobia, snake-bite, rent and revenue law, co-operative banking, the silk industry, and even the state of yarn market; the other would confine itself to the three R's, not even admitting drawing or clay-modelling, observation lessons or geography."⁴ The one believed that primary education should have not only a rural but also a practical bias, while the other thought that an ability to read and write simple things would lead to the political and social advancement of the country.

³ Ibid., p. 653.

⁴ U. P. Education Report (1911-12), p. 63.

Both these sets of opinions have been influencing rural education in the United Provinces ; on the one hand, persistent attempts have been made to adapt education to the needs of the people or to ruralise it ; on the other a steady movement towards the extension of primary education pointing to permissive compulsion is taking place.

Efforts to Ruralise Education.

In 1910, a champion of the former school, the Hon'ble Thakur (now Raja Bahadur) Kushalpal Singh moved a resolution in the provincial council to introduce suitable books in primary schools, and said that "the familiar surroundings of a rural schoolboy being essentially agricultural, the lesson-books should deal very largely with agricultural surroundings."⁵ Lessons on tenancy laws, health, sanitation, etc., were to be included in the text-books. The Government accepted the principle of the resolution but did not commit itself to the detailed suggestions made in it. A strong committee (known as the Rural Education Committee) was appointed to consider the whole subject of rural education and, in particular, to draw up a scheme for the preparation of new readers, and a syllabus of object lessons for use in primary schools. It drew up a scheme of nature study and observation lessons

⁵ *Abstract of Proceedings of the U. P. Council, of his Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Allahabad (1910), p. 78.*

and made certain other recommendations with reference to the curricula, which were later introduced into the schools.

While the committee was sitting, the Report on Public Instruction for 1910 brought out the dismal fact that there was a decrease in the number of primary schools and their scholars. The province had just undergone a succession of bad years, with famines, floods, plague, cholera and scarcity. The calamities had affected the finances of the Government, and there was retrenchment in 1910. Sir Claude de la Fosse, the Director, was of opinion that the decrease was due to epidemics, famine, the weeding out of schools not worth keeping open, strictness in marking attendance and in removing the names of habitual absentees, and to the lack of funds. He said that "in none of the reports is the decline in numbers attributed to radical defects in the system of instruction. . . . The wonder is that such a formidable combination of obstacles has affected the enrolment so little." But Government was not sure that it was not due in part at least to some deep-seated causes operating to retard the progress of education, and wondered whether the kind of instruction imparted had not something to do with it. As the critics of the system said that the education given was not suitable for the people, Government instituted an enquiry to ascertain the causes of decrease and retardation. A questionnaire was prepared, and the opinions of chairmen of district



SIR CLAUDE F. DE LA FOSSE, KT., C.I.E.
Director of Public Instruction, U.P.
1906—1922

boards, and of many officials and non-officials interested in education were collected. But the investigation did not throw any fresh light on the subject.

It was just at this time that Mr. Gokhale's persistent attempt for the introduction of permissive compulsion of primary education began

Efforts to improve Quantity.

to move the Government of India to action. It issued a Resolution

in 1913, which like its predecessor of 1904, expressed once more the pious resolve to 'break down illiteracy,' and to double the number of schools and scholars. It called upon the provincial governments to submit programmes for extending and improving primary education. The Government of the United Provinces, after several futile attempts to draw up adequate and workable schemes with the help of the boards and the department, appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Justice Piggott to advise the Government as to the proper line of advance, and the most profitable employment of funds which the Government made available for the purpose.

The Piggott Committee marks a step further not only in the extension of primary education, but also in the attempt of ruralising it. It examined the whole field of vernacular education, and for the first time the waste going on in the lower primary stage was brought prominently into notice. Only a small percentage (between ten and twelve per cent) of the boys who entered the preparatory section, reached

the upper primary classes, and those boys who left school before reaching there, carried nothing of lasting importance with them. Only a thorough grounding in the three R's at school could survive in the village atmosphere, which lacked literacy. In the opinion of the committee the main reason for this was the lack of adequate facilities for upper primary education. It therefore recommended that there should be a primary school within accessible distance of each village in the province. Each district was to be divided into a number of 'primary circles' in each of which there was to be a full primary school to which were to be attached as feeders any preparatory schools that might exist in the circle. The area of a circle was to be 25 square miles and a primary centre (i.e., a primary school with its feeders) was to have about 200 pupils.

This part of the recommendations was calculated to increase the number of children in schools. The scheme was introduced with certain modifications in most districts in 1916-17, and the number of pupils increased in that year by 30,000. But the increase was only in the lower classes. The easily accessible full primary schools did not encourage parents to keep their children longer in schools. The demand, it seemed, was only for lower primary education. Full primary education was brought to the door of the people, but they did not care much for it.

The next subject to which the committee gave their attention was the improvement of the curriculum. They did not believe

Another attempt to improve the curriculum. in teaching the absolute minimum of the three R's and they were

convinced of the necessity of making education suit the environment. A revised scheme of nature study and observation lessons was suggested. School gardens were to be encouraged. The committee—in order to meet the criticism that education in primary schools was not related to life—went to the length of reviving the reading of Patwari's paper and introduced the teaching of cash book, ledger accounts, forms of leases and counterparts, and the explanation of village papers. The readers were to contain lessons on sanitation and hygiene, "canal and well irrigation, the supply and care of cattle, the planting of trees, the advantages of agricultural co-operation, and the like." The lessons were to include even the evils of "over-indulgence in alcohol, drugs and cigarette smoking, provided such lessons were carefully prepared in such a form as not to put ideas into the boys' heads."⁶ When we consider that the average age of the boys in the highest class was 11 years, we might exclaim that the course was related to the surroundings with a vengeance!

⁶ *Resolution and the Report of the Piggott Committee on Primary Education, Allahabad (1914), pp. 22-23.*

But this formidable array of subjects needed better teachers. Moreover it was a common opinion that the language teaching was the weakest spot in the primary schools, and as the vernacular final passed candidates were accepted for teachers' training, the addition of one more year to the (Vernacular Middle) course was recommended. It was a wholly uncalled for measure, calculated to improve neither the standard of the middle examination nor the status of the middle passed student.

Thus the policy of the committee tried to meet the views of critics of both types. On the one hand it provided facilities of full primary education within easy reach of every village, and on the other hand it tried to make the curriculum as useful and attractive for the village parents and zamindars as possible. Yet even after the recommendations had been put into practice, the increase in numbers was found not to be proportionate to the efforts made and the fresh expenditure. The most disappointing fact was that the number of boys in the upper primary stage did not increase much.

The Government of Sir Harcourt Butler therefore resolved to make one more heroic effort to increase literacy on a voluntary basis. In this they were encouraged by the effects of the war and by the Government of India. The war had brought many theories to the test, and the value of the Indian villager as a citizen of the Empire was realised.

The effects of the war.

“Many thousands of her (India’s) sons have served in Europe and in distant quarters of Asia and Africa, and have returned with new ideas of men and things, while the economic disturbances due to the war have affected even the remotest village. Here again it was in the very height of the conflict that India’s new charter, the announcement of 20th August, 1917, was promulgated. By it the ideal of self-government within the Empire was first definitely accepted by Government, and in working out the first steps to be taken towards the attainments of this ideal it has been decided for better or for worse that democratic principles must be introduced, and the power now wielded by the official classes be placed in the hands of the representatives of the mass of the people, the great majority of whom are still illiterate. An urgent need has, therefore, arisen on political grounds for the wider diffusion of primary education.”⁷ The Government of India, therefore, addressed a letter⁸ in 1918 to provincial governments in which they advocated the adoption of a definite programme for the expansion of primary education to meet the changed circumstances. It hoped that the extension of the franchise would serve as an incentive for its expansion. The Government of the United Provinces launched a

⁷ Sir Selwyn Fremantle, *Education in Rural Primary Schools*, Allahabad, 1919, p. 3.

⁸ Government of India Circular No. 750, *Education*.

fresh scheme in 1918 by which in three years the number of schools and scholars was to be increased by 60 per cent, and no inelastic rule of distance was to be observed in locating new schools. The only criterion was to be 'the local effective demand.'

The Government of the United Provinces were as generous as they were enthusiastic at the time. During the years 1918-19 to 1923-24, the recurring grants given to the district boards for vernacular education increased from Rs. 15¾ lakhs to Rs. 61¾ lakhs, and in addition to these recurring grants, a sum of Rs. 22½ lakhs was given as a non-recurring grant for the improvement of buildings and equipment. A portion of the recurring grant was used in increasing the pay of teachers, which had become very urgent on account of the economic disturbance of the war. The fact remains, however, that the grant was quadrupled, but the increase in number of scholars (during the period 1919—1924) was only 27·74 per cent.⁹

In the meantime important constitutional changes affecting education had taken place. In 1921, Education was transferred to the control of a Minister responsible to an elected Legislative Council, and Mr. C. Y. Chintamani became the first Minister

⁹ K. P. Kichlu, Report on the *Improvement and Expansion of Primary Education for Boys in the U. P. and Oudh*, Allahabad (1925), p. 1



THE HON. MR. C. Y. CHINTAMANI
*First Minister of Education, United Provinces of
Agra and Oudh*

for Education. Education naturally attracted much public attention in the changed circumstances. It was realised that even after the attempts and expenditure, described in the preceding paragraph, the people in villages were not taking full advantage of the improved educational facilities. The water was brought to the horse, but the problem was how to make it drink. The voluntary method seemed to have reached its limit. Already bills for compulsory primary education had been passed by different provinces, and in the United Provinces itself an Act authorising permissive compulsion within the municipal areas was passed in 1919. The Government were therefore forced to ask themselves whether the time was not ripe for introducing compulsion in rural areas.

With this object in view, it placed Mr. K. P. Kichlu on special duty in 1924 to examine and report on the question how the present expenditure on primary education could be made to yield better results, and how far it would be possible to introduce compulsion in rural areas and with what limitations. In the report that he submitted Mr. Kichlu recommended that under certain conditions compulsion might be introduced in rural areas for boys of from 6 to 11 years of age. He thought that this would not only solve the problem of increasing the number of pupils in schools, thereby ensuring literacy, but that it would also guarantee a regular course of five years for each boy which would bring

him to the upper primary stage, thus preventing a relapse into illiteracy.

Mr. H. R. Harrop was placed on special duty to make a further report on the subject, and after considering both the reports, the Government accepted the principle of compulsion. In 1926 the Legislative Council passed the District Boards Primary Education Act authorising the boards to introduce compulsory primary education within any area under their jurisdiction. The Government would meet two-thirds of the cost of this scheme.

The step marks a distinct land-mark in the progress of education in the province, which would depend on the ability of the boards to contribute their share of the expenditure and on the resources of the Government to finance the schemes.



1. Vernacular Middle School, Kot [Fatehpur].
2. Vernacular Middle School and part of Boarding House Chhibramau [Farrukhabad].
3. Aided Vernacular Middle School, Sikandarpur [Farrukhabad].
Boys are seen taking their Terminal Examination.
4. Vernacular Middle School, Narwal [Cawnpore].
Inside the main room.
5. The Vernacular Middle School Boys [with their loads of books
which they have to bring everyday to School] Dt. Cawnpore.

CHAPTER IX

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE CAUSES OF SLOW PROGRESS OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS

*“The educational efforts, which, however successful in themselves, have reached but an insignificant number of those who are of a proper age to receive school instruction.”*¹

The above sentence occurred in the Despatch of 1854. Since then the Government of India have been maintaining a special Department of Education. Of late years, the leaders of the people have been giving their moral support to banish illiteracy. But what is the position to-day? In 1924 the number of schools for boys in rural areas of the United provinces was about 17,000, giving one school to each area of about seven square miles. The male population was twenty-three millions and the number of boys of school-going age (15 per cent of the population) was 3,950,000. But the vernacular schools of

Note.—This chapter as its name denotes, consists only of general ‘reflections.’ The educational, financial and administrative causes of the slow progress of education in the rural areas will be considered in subsequent volumes.

¹ Paragraph 48 of the Despatch of 1854.

all kinds had only 950,000 boys, i.e., 3,00,000 boys went without schooling.

We need not be told that when one out of four boys goes to school, he is from the upper classes. In 1922 almost one-fourth of the boys (191,605 out of a total of 754,573 in primary schools for boys) consisted of Brahmans. If statistics were available, it would be easy to demonstrate that the bulk of the remaining Hindus was made up by Kayasths, Bunias, and Khattris, i.e., boys from the 'literary' classes. The Muhammadans contributed one-sixth of the total (120,640). Out of these the majority must be from the upper classes. Thus we are forced to the conclusion that education has failed to penetrate the masses. It is still sought mostly by 'literary' classes only.

Many explanations have been given for such discouraging results after such heroic efforts. Lack of facilities was argued, and more and more schools were provided, but the masses did not come forward to take advantage of them. It was complained that the curriculum was not suitable, it did not relate to village life, it was too literary. This criticism was met by teaching children such diverse subjects as Patwari papers and nature-study, agriculture and sanitation; but the masses did not rush to drink of this intellectual nectar, although all parties have testified to the reverence in which education has been held by the people of Hindostan. The expenditure, which in the beginning resulted in

a large increase of numbers, has given progressively decreasing returns, thereby showing that the voluntary demand for primary education is almost satisfied. Even the sanguine hope of the Government and the leaders of the people that the new franchise would give an incentive to the masses to demand education has not been fulfilled.

What then is the explanation?

In order to understand the cause we should examine the attitude of the people towards the New Education, *of which primary education is only a part*, and compare its aim with the ideals of education of the people themselves.

The new education was essentially western in outlook. Its object was to make citizens. In a country which is moved even in these days of nationalism by religious sentiments, it was made secular. In the new schools the change was not only from the sitting mat to up-to-date style of benches, but also from the oriental form of courtesies to 'Good morning.' In a country of castes, it was sternly levelling in its principles and effects. The classes which had nothing except their social position and family pride, and each caste has its hierarchy, saw their last and most treasured position at the verge of ruin. Then, at least many of those who in the early days could ascend the higher ladder of education, had not only adopted the outward western forms, but had also developed an uncomfortably critical attitude. 'Nai Roshani' or 'New

Light ' as the English education was called, intellectually cut off the person under its influence from his old moorings and associations. In that stage he criticised all the beliefs and customs of his society, but could not adopt altogether Western ones. He became individualistic, a horror for the people whose haven of safety is the joint family.

Thus before long it was apparent that the struggle was a cultural one. Vernacular literature is full of satirical or open sneers at the new education. Even a proverb was coined which said: अंग्रेजी पढ़ी और आदमियत गई "with the study of English, humane qualities disappear," and it was a common saying in the latter part of the last century. The firefly of the new education was compared with the beacon light of the old one:

یہہ جگنو بھی نئی ہی روشنی سے ملتے جلتے ہیں
اندھیرا ہی رہا جنگل میں گو یہہ جا بجا چمکے

ये जुगनू भी नई ही रोशनी से मिलते जुलते हैं ।

अंधेरा ही रहा जंगल में गो यह जा बजा चमके

"These fireflies resemble the New Light, for although they flash all around, darkness reigns supreme as ever."

Thus society placed itself on the defensive. It called the new education राजविद्या or अर्थ करी विद्या 'Kings' education' or 'money-giving education.' It realised that the safest thing for it was not to drink of the enchanting juice. The old ways were the best ar-

mour against the attack of the Western culture. Akbar, the great Urdu poet of the last generation, said :—

مغربی دھول کا سر میں نہ پہنچتا تھا اثر
ایک یہ بات بہت خوب تھی عمامہ میں

मग़रबी धौल का सर में न पहुँचता था असर

एक यह बात बहुत खूब थी अम्मामे में ।

“ Because (the Sheikh) wore a turban, he did not feel the blows (influence) of the West.” The new education laid its devotee easily open to the attack of the Western culture, and the majority of the people were convinced of its inferiority—for was it not secular and worldly? Even the Muhammadans did not lag behind in denouncing it. Here is a passage from Akbar once more,

مشرقی کو ہے میل روحانی
مغربی کو ہے میل جسمانی

کہا منصور نے خدا ہوں میں
دارون بولا بوزنہ ہوں میں
ہنسکے کہنے لگے مرے (اک) دوست

فکر ہر کس بقدر ہمت اوست

मशरकी को है मैल रूहानी

मग़रबी को है मैल जिस्मानी

कहा मंसूर ने 'खुदा हूं मैं'

डार्विन बोला 'बूज़ना हूं मैं'

हँस के कहने लगे मेरे एक दोस्त
'फ़िक्र हर कस बक्रद हिम्मते ओस्त'

"The East is spiritual, the West is materialistic. Mansur declared 'I am God,' but Darwin exclaimed 'I am the son (descendant) of an ape.' My friend who was sitting by me smiled and said 'One can go only so far as one has courage or capacity.' "

Thus, the new education was believed (except by those who had become converted to it) to give but little to the East. It could not, however, be ignored by those who had to serve the State in one form or another to earn their livelihood. The matter was bluntly and tersely put by a *Sadar Amin* (a revenue officer) to Raja Siva Prasad: "Men labour for *Din* (next world or religion) or *Duniya* (this world). For *Din* we have our own books, for *Duniya* 'Marshman's Guide to Civil Law in Urdu.' This is sure to lead us to a principal *Sadar Aminship*, and we do not wish to become *Kiranis*."² Even to-day thousands of Hindus and Muhammadans who have no worldly ambition devote their lives to the 'un-productive and unprofitable' pursuits of old type of learning and suffer incredible privations for it. A visit to Benares is sufficient to illustrate this.

But it must not be supposed that India has not moved. World forces and other causes into which

² *Kiranis*—Christians. Sometimes the term is also used as a synonym for 'clerks.'

we need not enter here have moved the centre of gravity from the realm of religion to that of politics. What was formerly denounced as 'irreligious education' by ultra-religionists, began to be looked upon with suspicion by the politically-minded educated people. The non-co-operators thought aloud. They spoke out what they thought. They had no better, or even an alternative programme or syllabus to offer, but they denounced the existing one because in their opinion it was denationalising. They did not care what came in its place, so long as the existing form of education could be removed.

Thus it must be admitted that nowhere has an educational system worked under greater disadvantages. Outside the school or college the pupil heard it denounced, now by the religious leaders, then by the political leaders. The purely intellectual teaching enabled him to master facts of science, literature, history or philosophy, but the atmosphere around him was too nebulous to allow moral conviction. The classes in science or in philosophy would end with the explicit or implicit declaration—'The West has reached only so far, but our ancestors had gone much further.' If such a declaration was wanting in school or college it could be heard persistently outside. The over-enthusiastic Arya Samajist discovered in the Vedas mention of different machines and aeroplanes, and sang the songs of the glory of the Aryan civilization and its achievements. Others balanced the material

achievements of the West by citing the philosophical and moral achievements of the East. History was another subject which fostered an antagonistic attitude towards the new education. The text-books in schools—mostly mere chronicles of kings and full of defects and defeats of the Indians had a violent reaction. An eminent Urdu poet³ said, almost in disgust,

ہمیں لے دے کے ساری داستان میں یاد ہے اتنا
 کہ عالم گیر ہندو کش تھا، ظالم تھا، ستمگر تھا
 ہمیں لے دے کے ساری داستان میں یاد ہے اتنا
 کہ عالم گیر ہندو کش تھا، ظالم تھا، ستمگر تھا

“All that we remember of our history is the fact that Aurangzeb [whom Muhammadans regard as a model king] was [only] an oppressor of the Hindus and a tyrant.”

Thus a people with no knowledge of their present history had their compensation in dreams of the glorious past. They began to live in it and clung to it. The present was “ignominious and painful.” The moral effect on the pupil was disastrous. He was told one thing in school but heard it denounced outside. The teacher, who was ‘bought’ by the Government, was not to be relied upon. But while in order to pass the examination he learnt facts given to him,—he added as a post-

³ Maulana Shibli Nomani.

script like Galileo in his mind—"it is all false, nevertheless."

Is it to be wondered then that a sort of double personality was created in the boy? He stored in his mind and gave out those things which he not only did not believe but which he sometimes positively hated. He became accustomed to say one thing and feel another, to do one thing and think another. It did not conduce to better morals. Neither was he convinced, nor did he hear very often that the new education was a very good thing and desirable for its own sake.

This state of affairs was accentuated by the unpractical character of the education. It sought to train the head, but left the heart and hands to take care of themselves. Thus 'more well-informed than well-formed' educated people were turned out. All those subjects which can turn out more than a mere thinking machine—religion, fine arts, music, physical culture—were absent. Foreign poetry, however ennobling, can influence but a few. All the mental eyes in India cannot see the daffodils, nor can they visualise Boadicea's Druids 'pregnant with celestial fire.' Most of the Indian students dissect Shakespeare rather than enjoy him. The widespread evil of 'keys' and aids clearly points to this. It was not sufficiently realised that the pupils were not provided with sufficient opportunities for self-expression and self-activity without which no 'life' is possible. The want of training

of the hands and heart led to a one-sided development of the boy. Only his intellect was trained. The education might make him intellectual, but he could not become very practical.

The education despised by some, denounced by others was nevertheless sought after for its economic value. No person could get employment under the Government of Rs. 10 per month or more unless he had passed a certain examination at school. Thus the only motive in the eyes of the average man to seek education was a desire for, or the possibility of, Government service. As time went on, Government service became difficult to get. Formerly the middle class certificate was considered a passport for service, but with the number of matriculate candidates, it lost its value, and the saying became current :

इडिल मिडिल की ढ़ाड़े आस
लेके खुर्पा खोदो घास

“ Give up all hopes for the middle and the like. Take a hoe and cut grass (for a livelihood).” We have reached such a crisis that even M.A.’s now find difficulty in getting employment. And recently a novel appeared with the interesting caption—

एम० ए० पढ़ा के क्यों मेरी मिट्टी खराब की ?

“ Why did you spoil my life by giving me education up to M.A. ? ”

There was yet another complaint against modern education: it spoilt the health of the boys. We need not enter into the causes, but the fact remains that the educated people generally have bad health in India. As early as 1892, the Quinquennial Report on Education for 1892 (p. 142) speaking of village schools said: "It has been found, and very naturally, that boys who work for the upper primary examination and who, therefore, remain at school till they are from 13 to 15 years of age, are not merely averse to field labour, but physically unfit for it. Not one in a hundred of such boys can get literary employment. So they stay idling at home, and many parents have seen reasons to regret that they ever sent their sons to school." The present situation has been tersely summed up by Prof. Ramavatar Pande: "The country has more than enough facilities for giving clerks' education. For this education the parents of the pupil have to spend even more than four or five thousand rupees, and the pupil has to sacrifice his health (his digestion, eyesight, etc.) and spend twenty or twenty-five years of his life in getting this [useless] education."⁴

This, then, is the attitude of the people towards the education which exists to-day and of which primary education is only a part, and consequently shares its blame and praise. If the middle classes

⁴ *Madhuri*, p. 460, May, 1926.

(whose bread, prestige and position depend solely upon it) accept it as an inevitable fate without much enthusiasm and belief in it, apart from its economic value, why should the masses in the villages who can keep their bodies and souls together without service take the trouble of undergoing such an experience costly, not so much in money, as in time and health?

Earlier in this book, we have shewn that literacy does not, at the present day, help the agriculturist in his profession. There is nothing in the village life which requires literacy. Newspapers and literature suitable for the villager have still to be created. Literacy alone cannot protect a man against a powerful Zamindar or a wily Patwari. He generally resigns himself to fate when he deals with them. Still he is not against education, and may send his boy to school, partly because a few others send theirs, partly because he is kept occupied, and partly because he may hope to hear some day the *Ramayana* from his child. But he is poor, and as soon as the child is old enough to be of some use in the fields, or possibly to earn wages in these days of general scarcity, he is taken away from school. A living faith in education, which alone can make sacrifices possible, is wanting. There is no religious motive behind education, and the cultivator is too practical to listen to such things as 'franchise' and 'democracy' when only 3 per cent of the total population of the country is en-

titled to vote, and only a small fraction of the masses has been enfranchised.

To sum up then, mass education on voluntary basis in the rural areas has not made sufficient progress not only because of inadequate funds or facilities, but also because the people as a whole have very little enthusiasm for the type of purely secular and literary education which is being given, and because the condition, social and economic, in the villages is such that the average villager feels that he has but little use for it.

APPENDIX I

EDUCATION OF GIRLS

Female education is almost non-existent in the rural areas. The total number of girls on the rolls in all primary schools (urban as well as rural, and in boys' as well as in girls' schools) in the province in 1922 was 78,089. Separate figures for the urban and rural areas are not given, but considering the fact that all the municipal boards maintain girls' schools in town areas, the number of girls at school in rural areas must be very small.

The importance of female education was recognised by the Directors of the East India Company in their Despatch of 1854, in which they declared that "the importance of female education in India cannot be over-rated."¹ It further said: "Our Governor-General in Council has declared in a communication to the Government of Bengal that the Government ought to give to native female education in India its frank and cordial support; in this we heartily concur."² As a result, the work of organising girl schools in the North-Western Provinces was

¹ The Despatch of 1854, para, 83 (*Selections from Educational Records of Government of India, Part II, p. 388*).

² Ibid.

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undertaken, and in 1855 Pandit Gopal Singh, a deputy inspector of schools, enthusiastically began to establish them in the city and district of Agra. At first "the agricultural classes though quite willing and ready to make use of schools,³ were not then prepared to go further, and to pay the teacher." The teachers were selected by the parents of the scholars, and committees of local gentry were formed to manage the schools. Considerable progress had been made by January, 1857, when 288 girls' schools with 4,927 girls on the rolls were in existence. The movement had spread to Muttra and Mainpuri. But the schools were swept away during the Mutiny, and they recovered very slowly, so slowly indeed that in 1863 in three circles there were only 144 schools with 2,265 girls.

Since then there has been steady but extremely slow progress in female education. The bulk of girl pupils (97·6 per cent in 1917 and 97·3 per cent in 1922) do not go beyond the lower primary stage. This weakness has manifested itself in female education from the very beginning. Even "in 1870 there were in the three chief circles 6,953 girls at school, of whom 6,560 were in the two lowest classes—that is, had learnt next to nothing."⁴

³ Quoted in the Despatch of 1859, para. 27 (*Selections from Educational Records of Government of India, Part II, p. 436*).

⁴ *Appendix to Education Commission Report (1883), N. W. P. and Oudh Provincial Committee, Calcutta, 1883, p. 33.*

The problem, then, of female education is substantially the same, although more aggravated in form, as that of boys' education, viz., how to attract the children to school, and, when they come, how to retain them for a sufficiently long time to give them a sound grounding in the rudiments of the three R's. Time after time the Government have given liberal grants for the extension of female education. The yearly reports of education recorded slow advances, but did not hold out any bright prospects for the near future. At last, in 1905, the Government felt that something should be done, and realised that in this sphere the sympathy and co-operation of Indian gentlemen was essential for any appreciable advance. As a result, a committee consisting of influential officials and non-officials was appointed to advise the Government as to the best means of advancing female education. The committee recognised the existence of prejudice against female education and the part played by the 'purdah' in its retardation. Consequently they laid much emphasis on the importance of fostering a system of private tuition in the *zenanas* by means of peripetatic governesses. This was possible only in towns. They, however, felt that real advance must depend chiefly on the development of the school system. They recommended liberal grants to private enterprise in female education. In the rural areas where the difficulties of securing the service of lady teachers are almost insuperable, many girls were

being educated (as they are even to-day⁵) in boys' schools. The committee thought that this system was not favoured by public opinion, but they allowed it to be retained for girls under eight years of age where special facilities for the education of girls did not exist.

The Government accepted the recommendations of the committee. Since the system of visiting governesses was impracticable in the rural areas, the District Boards were advised to extend female education by opening new schools when teachers were available or by encouraging co-education. They tried both means.

In order to get the co-operation of the Indian gentry, committees for girls' schools were formed in 1908 with the chairmen of the district boards as presidents. But "in the majority of cases the committees died a natural death."⁶ The public as a whole was but little interested in female education and no other result could therefore be expected.

In 1913 another attempt was made to advance female education, and a sub-committee on it was appointed in connection with the Primary Education Committee. This sub-committee recommend-

⁵ In 1926-27, 39,200 girls (i.e., 31.55 per cent of the total enrolment of girls in Indian educational institutions of all kinds in the Province) were in boys schools mostly in rural areas.

⁶ *General Report on Public Instruction in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh*, 1911-12, p. 82.

ed certain changes in the curriculum including the lightening of the course in arithmetic and recommended certain methods of recruiting women, especially widows, for training as teachers. The lastnamed recommendation, however, was not accepted on account of the peculiar social position of the widows in India.

At the inauguration of the Reforms in 1921, the new government made special appeals to the local bodies to extend female education and promised liberal help. But so far as the rural areas are concerned the progress, though constant, is still far from being satisfactory.

The curriculum of girls' schools was the same as in boys' schools ; but since 1908 several changes have been made. The courses in mathematics have been curtailed for girls, and a special middle vernacular examination for them has been instituted, the course of which is shorter than that of boys' by one year. At the same time girls were not precluded from taking the course for boys. Sewing is made compulsory, and special readers have been introduced in girls' schools. Every attempt has been made to meet the criticism of public opinion in the matter of the duration of school life, of courses of study and of examinations.

But it is depressing to record that in spite of seventy years' efforts on the part of the Education Department to disseminate education among the girls, only an insignificant number of them are yet

in schools in rural areas. It should, however, be remembered that the education of girls has to face peculiar difficulties in India in general, and in the United Provinces in particular. The *purdah* system, early marriage, pressure of household duties—all combine to retard the progress of education among girls. Most of the difficulties are greater in rural areas than in towns. In the case of boys the great incentive is economic, that is, there is a possibility of their getting some kind of service if they are educated. In the case of girls this motive is absent. Some parents look at the matter from the financial point of view. They have to spend so much on the marriages of their daughters that even if they wish otherwise they can afford to spend only very little on the girls' education, which, translated into action, in most cases means almost nothing. The health of girls is generally so delicate (on account of causes into which we need not enter here) that the school-work affects it very adversely. The Report of 1912 said: "A constant problem and one which seems to be not unconnected with the above state of things is the prevalence of consumption among girls in the boarding schools and among those who have left a year or two. Often it seems that their physique is unequal to the strain of study up to the middle (vernacular school) and that the course should be cut down."⁷

⁷ Ibid., 1911-12, p. 80.

But the chief cause of the people's indifference to the education of girls is a lack of faith in the suitability of the system of education. They cannot avoid it in the case of their boys ; but the girls must be kept aloof from the contagion of this ' soulless ' education which unfits them for motherhood, and tends towards a tremendous domestic and social revolution in Indian homes. It is not merely a question of domestic happiness and convenience, but it is also a matter of cultural and religious importance for the people. So long as the women remain ' staunch ' Hindus or ' staunch ' Muhammadans, the future is safe and the citadel of conservatism will remain impregnable to the revolutionary social and cultural ideas of the West, for in spite of *purdah*, women exert an influence on the domestic and national life of the people in India which is hardly credible considering their seclusion. The people do not object to their wives, sisters and daughters reading books or writing letters. But the prejudice against sending them to schools is still very strong, and, so far as the rural areas are concerned, there is very little hope of much change in the near future.

Allied with the above cause is a wide divergence of opinion among the people regarding the relative value of home and school instruction for girls. At home they get training in the family traditions, family or community ceremonies, songs, customs, etc., and a very practical and generally high class training in

domestic affairs such as cooking and sewing. At home they get either direct or indirect religious training. If they are sent to schools, they do not find time to get this home-training, which is very essential and valuable for society as it is constituted. In schools the education is literary, hardly practical enough and, what is most objectionable from the point of view of the average parent, contrary in its influence to home-training. Many parents, therefore, who are not averse from educating their daughters, feel that they are justified in sacrificing some of the literary education of their daughters for the more valuable home-training.

The main causes of the slow progress in quantity have been noticed. The poor quality of female education is another of its outstanding features. This is due to a lack of competent women-teachers. In the Quinquennial Report (1922), Mr. A. H. Mackenzie, the Director of Public Instruction, says: "From the districts there is a universal complaint about the impossibility of staffing girls' schools."⁸ There is a very strong prejudice against a woman's working for payment, and this prejudice is much intensified when she lives alone and is out of *purdah*." He tersely puts the whole situation as follows: "The educated woman is in any case lonely, and, if she is in *purdah*, away from her family, the loneli-

⁸ *General Report on Public Instruction in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh*, 1922, p. 122.

ness must be beyond description ; yet, if she is out of *purdah*, she often loses the respect that is necessary to win scholars.”⁹

The real difficulty, however, in his opinion “ comes from the scarcity of women with any qualifications, however low.”¹⁰ The poor quality of teachers has its effect on the teaching. In some cases the boards encourage old pandits or moulvis to teach in girls’ schools. Where this is done the details of discipline and the methods of teaching are both better than those in the schools managed by poorly educated, untrained and inexperienced women teachers.

On the whole, the problem of female education in rural areas is not yet within sight of solution. Until boys’ education is widely diffused and the people’s faith in the kind of education given in schools is established, female education will make but little progress in rural areas, and only a slow and halting advance in town areas.

⁹ Ibid., 1922, p. 122.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 123.

APPENDIX II

TRAINING OF TEACHERS

Perhaps the most revolutionary change brought about by the introduction of the Western system of education in India has been in the outlook and position of teachers. Formerly the village school-master looked to the villagers for support and patronage. He was their servant, and it was in his interest to secure their support and goodwill. In professional matters there was none to question him. He was practically master of his school.

But the systematisation of education could not leave him unaffected. On the administrative side he became merely a cog of one of the wheels of a huge machine, in which he lost his identity. On the instructional side he had others to guide, correct and test his work and knowledge. He was not only considered unfit, but so unworthy of reliance, that even promotion examinations were conducted by the inspecting staff in the village schools. This affected not only his pride but also lowered his self-respect. He found that in the changed circumstances he had practically no motive to keep up his intimate relation with the villagers, for now his eyes were turned from the villagers to the Education Department for support. Moreover, as he is liable to

be transferred at any time he feels he has no reason to identify himself with the life of the village or to take interest in its problems.

This change in his position, coupled with an absence of religious education in schools, and the exclusively secular and official character of schools has changed the attitude of the villagers also towards him. The reverence in which the teacher was held primarily for the religious character of his teaching could not be maintained for long, and rather tactless, at any rate a revolutionary method of recruitment of teachers, by which sometimes the so-called lowcaste men were selected as teachers and were posted even in predominantly Brahman and Thakur villages, destroyed the traditional reverence for the teacher. He came to be regarded, and was suffered, as an official of Government.

It goes without saying that the village school-master was ill-equipped for teaching the secular subjects in the village schools, and the educational authorities from the very beginning realised the need of training him. In 1852, at an institution called the Central Tahsili School, an attempt was made at Agra to train teachers for the *halkabandi* and *tahsili* schools. The first regular normal school was established in 1855 in which one hundred *halkabandi* school-teachers were trained for a period of four months. The object was to give them some idea of the principles of teaching and class-management. The need of well-qualified teachers was so pressing,

and the arrangements for training were so limited, that even a four months' training was better than no training at all. In 1856 and 1857, two other normal schools were opened at Meerut and Benares. The course was now lengthened to a year. In 1864 another normal school was started in Oudh, but the system adopted here was different. It comprised two departments, a senior and a junior. The former prepared teachers for *tahsili*, and the latter for the village primary schools. The curriculum in the Junior Department consisted of Hindi or Urdu (one of which was compulsory) arithmetic, history of India, general geography, map-drawing, mensuration, and surveying, besides a teacher's manual. In the Senior Department the course of studies included advanced mensuration, algebra, and the first three books of Euclid, and more advanced courses in language. Practice in teaching was also given. In 1874, this system of graduation was introduced in other normal schools also.

The candidates for normal schools are drawn from among vernacular-middle passed young men. They come mostly from villages and consequently their outlook is rather narrow. Later on, when more candidates were forthcoming, and when the necessity not only of better professional training but also that of teaching to them ordinary school subjects to an advanced stage was realised, the normal training course was extended to two years. The importnace of the latter part of their course cannot be overrated, for

if they are posted in the vernacular middle schools they have to teach boys up to the same standard which they themselves had attained, and if they are sent to primary schools they find that the middle course is only three years ahead of the highest class in these schools. As the needs of village schools are realised, new subjects are added to the course of normal schools. Physical training, freehand and blackboard drawing, nature-study, object-lessons, clay-modelling and manual training have been introduced (the first two as compulsory and the rest as optional subjects) in these schools. In 1902, a special agricultural class was opened at the Moradabad Normal School as an experimental measure, to train teachers in the principles of agriculture with a view to their serving as agricultural instructors in village schools. But as there was no demand among the agricultural population for such training, the class had to be closed. Three more normal schools were established and their number in the province is now eight.

At the most normal schools could supply only a small number of trained teachers compared with the needs of the province. They were, and are, employed as masters in the middle vernacular and headmasters in the primary village schools. The vast majority of village school teachers remained unaffected by the modern educational influences. To familiarise these teachers with modern methods and to broaden their outlook, a scheme of village

schoolmasters' meetings was launched in 1902, and proved a great success. It showed once more that the village schoolmaster was willing to learn new methods.

But the knowledge gained at such meetings was scrappy and could not be even a poor apology for regular training. Since it was found that the only training available, that at normal schools, was very costly, it was felt that some simpler and less costly system must be devised for the training of the village teacher, by which, besides the principles and methods of teaching he might get sufficient practice in teaching under proper supervision. At last in 1905, the Teachers' Training Classes were started. They consist of from six to eight pupil-teachers under an instructor trained at a normal school and are attached to a primary school. The pupil teachers are employed for half the working day in receiving instruction in the principles of teaching and in the further study of ordinary class subjects, and for the other half in teaching preparatory and lower primary classes under the supervision of the instructor or a trained member of the staff of the school. The training lasts for a year, at the end of which they are examined by a board over which the assistant inspector of schools presides. This has proved not only a cheap and quick method of training the village teacher, but has also been found to meet his ordinary needs. There are three normal schools for training women teachers in the province and they

supply teachers mostly for town schools. The system of training classes has not been used in the case of women on account of peculiar social difficulties.

The teacher trained at a normal school is as a rule very hard-working and does routine work very well, but he has little initiative or adaptability. For this, partly the normal school, and partly his previous training and surroundings are responsible. Although things are now rapidly changing, the normal schools have hitherto worked under considerable disadvantages. Formerly the majority of the staff of these schools was untrained, and even now some of the schools have such men. Facilities for practice in teaching for the pupil-teachers are limited, as only one model school is attached to a normal school. These schools are situated in big towns, and during his training, the pupil teacher gets accustomed to town conditions, whereas his work lies in villages. Although "stereotyped mechanical methods have been discouraged, the traditions of a narrow wooden system of training have taken deep root and are not quickly and easily eradicated."¹ Nor is there much hope for a radical change in the near future for, as Sir Claude de la Fosse remarked, "too much cannot be expected from a class of men whose mental outlook is and must remain necessarily circum-

¹ *General Report on Public Instruction in the United of Agra and Oudh, 1911-12, p. 67.*

scribed.”² There are but few books on pedagogical subjects in Hindi and Urdu and those which exist are mostly in the nature of aids to cram. As there are practically no libraries in village schools and in villages, the pupil teachers have no opportunity to develop a taste for and the habit of reading outside books. While they are under training they have neither time nor will to do any outside reading. They are weak in languages, and this has been noticed by the Department time after time. The recommendations of the Piggott Committee (1913) resulted in the extension of the vernacular middle course by one year, with the hope of giving better training in Hindi and Urdu, but this hope has not been realised, for the standard of attainment has not risen. Since then special examinations in Hindi and Urdu literature for teachers have been instituted, and they are encouraged in private study to a certain extent. The habit of cramming, contracted in the primary and middle schools, persists in the normal schools, and is to a certain extent encouraged by the emphasis put on the written examination there. As Sir-Claude de la Fosse has remarked,³ “the next result of a course in the principles of teaching too often appears to be, not the acquisition of real professional skill, but the absorption of a ‘hoard of petty

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., 1912, p. 68.

maxims,' which they [the students] are unable to apply intelligently."

This theoretical nature of his training and a failure on his part to grasp the educational needs of the village population has been brought into prominent relief recently by the failure of rural education to attract the people. The Government have realised this fact. In their resolution on Mr. K. P. Kichlu's report, they say that the chief need, so far as teachers are concerned seems to be⁴ "to evolve a type of teacher who understands not merely child psychology, but also understands the rural parent. . . . The training arrangements for teachers should aim at giving them greater technical skill, but at the same time a rural outlook."

The problem has been grasped. It remains to be seen how it is solved.

⁴ Government Resolution No. 599/XV, August, 1926, para 3.

APPENDIX III

CONTROL OF RURAL EDUCATION

Since the passing of Lord Ripon's Local Self-Government Act in 1883, the education in rural areas, which is mainly vernacular education, was controlled in the name of the Lieutenant-Governor by the Secretary to Government in the Local-Self-Government Department. This Department controlled the finances of rural vernacular education. The District Magistrates were responsible for it in their capacity of chairmen of the district boards. The district inspecting staff—viz., the deputy and sub-deputy inspectors—were appointed by the district boards. The Education Department advised them on technical points and its divisional inspectors and their assistants inspected the instructional side of the schools. The process of centralisation began in 1912 when the district inspecting staffs were provincialised and placed under the control of the Education Department. In 1917, a Board of Education was established, but its functions were purely advisory. It was reconstituted in 1925 and renamed the Board of Vernacular Education. The constitutional reforms were introduced in 1921 and the control of education was transferred to the Ministers responsible to the reformed Councils. The control of rural

vernacular education was now taken away from the Local Self-Government Department and placed under that of Education, and the finances were put under the control of 'Education' instead of under that of 'Local Self-Government.' This increased the work in the Education Department, and to cope with it a Chief Inspector of Vernacular Education was appointed in 1921, but was later designated the Deputy Director of Public Instruction. He is in charge of rural education. In 1922, the U. P. District Boards Act was passed and the Boards were given non-official chairmen. Thus the district authorities have now no direct control over rural education, and the Boards enjoy greater freedom in matters of detail. At present rural education is under the Governor acting with his Ministers, administered by the Secretary to Government in the Education Department, which dispenses Government grants to the District Boards. The district administration of education is under the District Boards presided over by elected non-official chairmen.¹ They have no educational officers of their own, because the deputy and sub-deputy in-

¹ Since this was written, Chairman of the Education Committee of a District Board has been vested with the powers in matters educational which were formerly exercised by the Chairman of the Board. The Education Committee consists of from ten to twelve members, three or four of whom are co-opted from outside. This committee elects its chairman from among the members. The Deputy-Inspector of Schools is its *ex-officio* Secretary.

spectors are now appointed by the Department of Public Instruction. But they, being administrative officers, are placed under the District Boards. Thus their position is very anomalous. They are paid by the Education Department, and for the educational side of the rural schools are responsible to the Divisional Inspectors. But as they are the executive officers of the Boards in educational matters they have to carry out the orders of the Boards. The Boards on the other hand look upon them with suspicion as they are no more their full servants. The divisional inspectors have now lost much of their authority in administrative matters, and their function is now purely advisory. They inspect the rural schools as before.

The net result of these changes is that the administration of rural education has been transferred to bodies entirely and directly representative of local interests. The policy with regard to rural education is directed by the Minister of Education who is responsible to the Legislative Council which has a non-official and elected majority.

APPENDIX IV

THE SCHOOL-GOING AGE

At present 15 per cent of the population is considered to be that of the school-going age. For boys of the compulsory age the calculation is made at $13\frac{1}{3}$ per cent (between the ages of 6 and 11) of the population in this province. Estimates of different administrators and educationists with regard to the percentage of the children of the school-going age in the population have differed considerably. The following extract from Mr. M. Kempson's report for 1871-72 throws considerable light on the subject:¹

“Having promised so much in the way of detail, I turn to more general conclusions with regard to population and area. Two preliminary points require consideration—(1) What is the school-going age in India? (2) What fraction of the population represents children of this age? I confine the inquiry to the boy-population only, as the number of girls at school is too insignificant to require proportional enumeration. As regards the school-going age, Mr. Thomason's Circular Order of 1845, issued

¹ *Report on the Progress of Education in the North-Western Provinces for 1871-72.* Allahabad, 1872, p. 8.

for the information of Collectors of Districts, laid down that the age best adapted for receiving instruction was from the beginning of the 5th to the beginning of the 15th year. The custom of the country undoubtedly favours this statement, but the number of boys under the age of 6, actually at school, are found to be rarely more than 4 per cent of the whole. About the same percentage represents the boys at school, who are above the age of 15, and on the whole it may be safely assumed that 90 per cent of any specified number of boys at school, carefully counted, will be found to rank between the age of 6 and 16.² The "compulsory age" in Germany is from 6 to 14, but there are of course numbers of boys at school beyond the age of 14 years. Moreover, infant schools in Europe reduce the lower limit to 4 and sometimes to 3 years. This explains the calculation made in 1870 by the Commissioner of the Council of Education in England with reference to elementary schools that 63 per cent of the children at school are under 9 years of age. Children at infant schools being thus included in the estimate, the school-going age in Europe is from 4 to 15 on the average. But as there are no infant schools in India, the period from 5 to the end of the 14th year, say 5 to 15, which as said above,

² Mr. H. S. Reid's reports on indigenous education in 1850-51, and the succeeding year, show that 90 per cent. of two carefully counted batches of 26,570 and 34,200 school-boys were between the ages of 6 and 16.

was Mr. Thomason's estimate as well as Mr. Adam's may be taken as nearly correct for present purposes. The author of a *Manual of Universities*, published a few years ago (1862) in Calcutta, adopts this period also as the school-going age for India, after a comparison of the statistics of European countries with those of India.

The next point is less easily determined in the absence of exact statistics of population. It is by no means easy to say what fraction of the native population is of the school-going age. Mr. Thomason's Circular Order of 1845 takes one-twelfth of the whole population to be boys of an age suitable to go to school. Mr. Fink's³ table (Appendix to Education Report for 1846-47) is calculated on this assumption, but three very curious notes are added. It seems that Mr. Alexander, Collector of Etawah, calculated that the number of boys in his district "fit for instruction" were one-fifth of the population. Mr. Wilson, in Moradabad, said one-eighth, and Mr. J. Muir, in Azimgurh, rated them at one-sixth. Again in a later report I find that Mr. Pearson made the boy population of the Calpee District one-sixth of the whole; and the evident care with which this last calculation was made throughout the Pergunnahs of Calpee, Jalal-pore, and Koonch, caste by caste and tribe by tribe,

³ Mr. Fink was an educational officer employed to collect statistics.

precludes the supposition that girls as well as boys were counted. The author of the Manual of Universities above quoted, after reference to European statistics, states his belief that one-eleventh of the population of India are boys of an age to go to school. In the report of the Council of Education in England for 1870, it is stated upon the authority of the best statistical researches, that 183 out of 1,000 persons are boys and girls between the ages of 5 and 12. This looks as if one-eleventh was the boy-population of that age in England; and corresponds with Mr. Plowden's (Collector of Meerut) statement, that one-tenth is the boy-population in England between the ages of 5 and 14. The same officer, whose acquaintance with the subject of census returns in India makes his opinion valuable, informs me that the proportion of children to adults is greater in the North-Western Provinces than in England. I think it unnecessary to refer to other data; and that enough has been said to show that one-twelfth, the proportion assumed by the Government, North-Western Provinces, in 1845, is too low an estimate of the boy-population in this part of India. I should prefer to take one-tenth, the average in England, balancing the effects of better food, climate, sanitation, and medical resources in preserving child-life thereby the fact that adults die at an earlier age here, for this seems to be the explanation for Mr. Plowden's remark."

APPENDIX V

MINISTERS OF EDUCATION, UP TO 1926

The Hon'ble Mr. C. Y. Chintamani. 1921—23.

The Hon'ble Raja Paramanand. 1923-24.

The Hon'ble Rai Rajeshwar Bali, O.B.E. 1924—28.

DIRECTORS OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, UP TO 1926

Mr. Henry Stewart Reid, B.C.S., Visitor-General, 1845—1854. D.P.I., 1855—1862.

Mr. M. Kempson, M.A., 1862—1877.

Mr. R. T. H. Griffith, M.A., 1877—1884.

Mr. E. White, 1884—1892.

Mr. J. C. Nesfield, M.A., 1892—1894.

Mr. T. C. Lewis, M.A., 1894—1906.

Sir Claude F. de la Fosse, Kt., C.I.E., 1906—1922.

Mr. A. H. Mackenzie, M.A., C.I.E., 1922—

APPENDIX VI

THE UNITED PROVINCES DISTRICT BOARDS PRIMARY EDUCATION ACT, 1926.

UNITED PROVINCES ACT No. I OF 1926.

[PASSED BY THE LOCAL LEGISLATURE OF THE UNITED
PROVINCES OF AGRA AND OUDH.]

*Received the assent of the Governor of the United
Provinces of Agra and Oudh on March 23, 1926,
and of the Governor-General on April 21, 1926,
and was published under section 81 of the Gov-
ernment of India Act on May 8, 1926.*

An Act to provide for the extension of primary edu-
cation in rural areas under district boards in the
United Provinces.

WHEREAS it is the declared policy of the Govern-
ment of the United Provinces that universal, free and
compulsory primary education for boys and girls

should be reached by a definite programme of progressive expansion, and whereas it is expedient to provide for a progressive development and expansion of primary education ; it is hereby enacted as follows :—

1. (1) This Act may be called the United Pro-
 Short title, vinces District Boards Primary Edu-
 extent, and con- cation Act, 1926.
 struction.

(2) It extends to all the areas under the jurisdiction of the district boards in the United Provinces.

(3) It shall be construed as supplementary to the United Provinces District Boards Act, 1922, hereinafter called the Principal Act.

2. In this Act, unless there is anything repug-
 Definitions. nant in the subject or context,—

(1) “ to attend ” a recognized primary school means to be present for instruction at such school, on such days in the year, at such time or times, and for so many hours on each day of attendance, as may be fixed by the board ;

(2) “ child ” means a child whose age is not less than six and not more than eleven years : provided that “ child ” when referring to a Muslim girl, shall mean a child whose age is not less than five and not more than nine years ;

(3) “ parent ” includes a guardian or any person who has the actual custody or is in charge of a child ;

- (4) “ primary education ” means instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic of such standard as may be prescribed for primary schools by the local Government, and such instruction in other subjects, if any, as may be determined by the board with the approval of the prescribed authority ;
- (5) “ recognized primary school ” includes a school or a department of a school in which instruction in primary education is given and which is for the time being recognized by the Director of Public Instruction ;
- (6) “ school committee ” means a committee appointed under the provisions of section 6 of this Act ;
- (7) “ school area ” means the area within a radius of one mile by the nearest route from a primary school maintained by the board and included within the local limits of a board ;
- (8) “ tahsil area ” means the area comprised in a tahsil and included within the local limits of a board ;
- (9) “ thana area ” means the area comprised in the limits of a police station and included within the local limits of a board ;
- (10) “ village area ” means the area comprised in a village.

3. (1) On the application of the board the local Government may declare, by notification, that the primary education of male children shall be compulsory in the whole of the board's area or in any part thereof, for example, in any tahsil area, thana area, school area or village area.

Issue of notification making primary education compulsory.

(2) Where a notification issued under sub-section (1) is in force in any area, the local Government may, on the application of the board, issue a notification that the primary education of female children shall be compulsory in the whole or any part of such area.

(3) A notification issued under this section shall specify the date from which, and the area or areas in which primary education shall be compulsory, and public notice shall be given of the notification locally in the area or areas concerned.

(4) A board, if called upon by the local Government so to do, shall, within a time to be specified by the local Government, submit a scheme to provide compulsory primary education in such area as the local Government may direct, and in the case of children of either sex or both sexes as the local Government may specify.

(5) If a board when called upon makes default in submitting a scheme or after a scheme has been sanctioned omits to make adequate provision for compulsory primary education in accordance with a scheme as sanctioned or to bring into operation or to continue to keep in operation such scheme, the

local Government may after due inquiry appoint a person to submit the scheme or to bring it into operation or to continue to keep it in operation, as the case may be, and the expense thereof shall be paid by the board to the local Government. If the expense is not so paid, the local Government may make an order directing any person who has, for the time being, custody of any moneys on behalf of the board as banker or in any relation, to pay such expense from such moneys as he may have in his hands or may from time to time receive, and such person shall be bound to obey such order.

4. A notification shall not be issued under section 3 unless (a) the board has, by

Board to make provision for primary education. special resolution which has been passed by a vote of not less than one-half of the total number of members constituting the board, resolved that such primary education should be made compulsory, and (b) the local Government is satisfied that the board is in a position to make, and will make adequate provision in recognized primary schools for such compulsory primary education free of charge.

5. An application by the board under section 3 shall be made in such manner as

Application for issue of notification. may be prescribed by the local Government, and the board shall furnish such information in respect of the application as may be required by the local Government.

6. (1) Where a notification has been issued ^{Appointment of} under section 3, the board shall ^{school committee.} appoint one or more committees for the purpose of exercising the powers and performing the duties of the school committee under this Act.

(2) It shall be the duty of such school committee, subject to the provisions of this Act, to enforce the provisions of this Act respecting the attendance of children at school and the employment of children.

7. Where a notification under section 3 is in force in any area, the parent of ^{Duty of parents to cause children to attend school.} every child to whom the notification applies shall, if such child ordinarily resides in such area, in the absence of a reasonable excuse as hereinafter defined cause such child to attend a recognized primary school.

8. Any of the following circumstances shall be ^{Meaning of} deemed to be a reasonable excuse ^{reasonable excuse.} within the meaning of section 7 :—

- (1) that there is no accommodation in a recognized primary school within a distance to be fixed by the school committee and measured according to the nearest route from the residence of the child ;
- (2) that the child has been exempted by the school committee on religious grounds ;
- (3) that the child is receiving otherwise than in

a recognized primary school primary education in a satisfactory manner ;

(4) that the child is certified by such authority as may be appointed in this behalf by the board to have completed the primary course ;

(5) that the child has been granted temporary leave of absence from school, in accordance with regulations made under this Act by the board ;

(6) that the child is certified by a medical officer approved for this purpose by the board to be unfit to attend school by reason of some bodily defect or infirmity ;

(7) that the child has, with the consent of the prescribed authority, been exempted by the school committee for special reasons recorded by it in writing.

9. Where the school committee is satisfied that a parent who is bound under the

Issue of attendance order by the school committee. provisions of section 7 to cause a child to attend a recognized primary school, has failed to do so,

the school committee after giving the parent an opportunity of being heard, and after such inquiry as it considers necessary, may pass an order directing the parent to cause such child to attend a recognized primary school from a date which shall be specified in the order.

10. (1) Any parent against whom an order has been passed under section 9, and who without reasonable excuse as defined in section 8 has failed to obey such order, shall on conviction before a magistrate be liable to a fine not exceeding five rupees.

(2) Any parent who having been convicted of an offence under sub-section (1) continues to disobey the order passed under section 9 shall be liable to a further fine not exceeding one rupee for every day, after the date of the first conviction, during which he is proved in a subsequent proceeding taken before a magistrate to have persisted in disobeying the order.

11. Any person other than the parent who, during the prescribed hours of attendance at school, utilizes on his own behalf or on behalf of any other person, in connexion with any employment, whether for remuneration or not, the services of any child whose parent is required under this Act to cause him to attend a recognized primary school, shall, on conviction before a magistrate, be liable to a fine not exceeding twenty-five rupees.

12. (1) No court shall take cognizance of an offence under section 10 or section 11 except on the complaint of or on information received from the school committee, or from such person as

Penalty for failure to obey attendance order.

Penalty for employing child liable to attend primary school.

Cognizance of offence and power to compound.

may be authorised by the school committee by general or special order in this behalf :

Provided that the school committee or the person authorised in this behalf shall, before instituting a prosecution against any person, cause a warning to be given to him in writing.

(2) The school committee or the person authorized in this behalf may, instead of instituting or continuing prosecution for an offence, compound the same on the payment by the person accused of such offence of such sum as it deems proper not exceeding the amount of the fine with which such offence is punishable under this Act.

13. The local Government, after taking into consideration any views expressed by the board in this behalf, may, by notification, exempt any particular class or community from the operation of this Act.

14. No fee for primary education shall be charged in respect of any child compulsorily attending a recognized primary school within an area in which a notification under section 3 is in force.

15. All sums realized on conviction or by way of composition under the provisions of this Act shall be credited to the board's fund.

16. When the local Government is of opinion that default has been made by any board in respect of its duties under this Act, it may, after giving the board an opportunity of furnishing an explanation, cancel the notification issued under section 3.

Withdrawal of
notification on
default.

17. (1) The local Government may, after previous publication, make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act.

Power of local
Government to
make rules.

(2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the power conferred by sub-section (1), the local Government may make rules—

- (a) prescribing the authorities mentioned in clause (4) of section 2 and clause (7) of section 8 ;
- (b) prescribing under clause (4) of section 2 the standard of instruction in primary schools ;
- (c) prescribing the manner in which application may be made by the board under section 3 and the particulars to be stated in such application ;
- (d) determining generally what shall be considered to be adequate provision for compulsory primary education free of charge ;

- (e) requiring the board to prepare and publish a register of children in the whole or in any part of the board's area ;
- (f) defining the conditions on which the local Government will bear a share of the cost of providing primary education ;
- (g) requiring the board to submit such returns as the local Government may think fit showing the action taken and progress made by the board under this Act ; and
- (h) laying down the conditions of and qualifications for the appointment of teachers with due regard to the educational needs of different communities in every locality.

18. With the previous sanction of the local Government a board in the area of which a notification under section 3 is in force may make regulations consistent with this Act, prescribing—

Power of board to make regulations.

- (a) the supply of text-books and educational requisites to the children of indigent parents free of charge ;
- (b) the manner in which the school committee shall be constituted, its jurisdiction, the number of its members, and their duties, powers and responsibilities ;

- (c) the steps which the school committee may take to secure the attendance of children at school, and the conditions under which leave of absence from school may be allowed ;
- (d) the jurisdiction of each school committee where more school committees than one are appointed ;
- (e) the relations to be observed between the school committee and any education committee that may have been appointed under the Principal Act.

19. The local Government shall not delegate its
 Delegation of powers under this Act.
 powers.

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TABLES

In 1850-51 the North-Western Provinces consisted of six revenue divisions of five districts each, together with nine non-regulation* districts. The Delhi division was transferred to the Panjab Government after the mutiny, and certain cessions of territory were added from Jhansi. By 1862, the Saugar division (except Lalitpur) was included in the Central Provinces, and in 1870 Ajmer was placed under the Agent to the Governor-General for Rajputana. Dehradun and Kumaon with Garhwal, therefore, alone remain of the non-regulation provinces of 1850-51. The following tables do not contain figures for those districts which have thus been separated from this province. Oudh was annexed in 1856, but the figures for that province are not included in the following tables for years prior to 1881-82.

* These non-regulation districts were : Saugar, Damoh, Jubbulpore, Seoni, Narsinghpore, Ajmer, Bhatiana, Dehradun, Kumaon.

TABLE I

Year	Tahsili or Town (Boys) Schools			Primary or Halkabandi (Boys) Schools		
	Schools	Schoolers	Cost Rs.	Schools	Scholars	Cost Rs.
1851	58	3,209	83,521	14	563	1,680
1861-62	244	14,935	52,201	2,823	84,392	1,26,900
1871-72	209	11,994	56,731	3,141	1,02,129	3,50,000
1881-82	462	3,803	61,910	5,403	1,90,272	6,22,156
*1891-92	333	6,005†	1,88,295	4,183	1,47,714	6,16,449
1901-02	301	8,803	1,01,617	7,263	3,24,699	11,91,807
1911-12	375	45,378	4,40,441	9,258	4,80,544	16,43,050
1921-22	556	43,074	12,00,646	15,496	7,87,737	62,92,110

N.B. - Separate figures for rural and urban areas are not available.

* From 1891-92 the figures for Vernacular, Anglo-Vernacular, and European primary schools and their scholars are not shown separately. It is, therefore, not possible to say how many of the schools were purely vernacular ones, and what was the number of boys in them.

† Before 1892 many middle ('ahsili) schools were allowed to have primary classes. The figures of scholars (in Tahsili schools) for 1851, 1861-62 and 1871-72 evidently include the boys who were enrolled in their primary classes.

TABLE II—SCHOLARS

Year	(i) In Tahsili		(ii) In Primary		(iii) Of both sexes in all types of institutions (from the university to primary schools) in the province.
	Boys' schools	Girls' schools	Boys' schools	Girls' schools	
1851	3,209	...	563	(Not available)	Not available
1861-62	14,935	...	84,392	369	167,475
1871-72	11,994	...	102,129	7,917	163,109
1881-82	3,803	6	190,272	7,712	225,596
1891-92	6,005	22	147,714	9,102	217,378
1901-02	8,803	31	324,699	14,486	368,495
1911-12	45,378	1,577	480,544	31,749	621,588
1921-22	43,074	7,531	787,757	45,203	965,059

N.B.—Many girls are enrolled in boys' primary schools. The number of girls in schools is, therefore, considerably larger than what is shown under girls' schools.

TABLE III

CREED-WISE DETAIL OF SCHOLARS (BOYS AND GIRLS IN THE PRIMARY STAGE)

Year	Hindus	Muslims	Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians	Others	Total
1881-82	165,456	31,484	924	120	197,984
1891-92	131,424	21,717	3,489	186	156,816
1901-02	282,265	50,152	6,642	126	339,185*
1911-12	437,003	71,976	2,149	1,165	512,293
1921-22	696,289	130,915	2,653	2,705	832,562

* Including 2568 scholars in European primary schools.

TABLE IV—INDIGENOUS SCHOOLS
(For Males and Females)

Year	Teaching vernaculars	Teaching Oriental languages	Teaching Koran	Total Schools	Total Scholars
1845	...	...	...	7,361 *	64,333
1861-62	...	...	...	6,155	61,474
1871-72	...	...	...	4,608	55,456
1881-82	...	No information available	...	...	...
1891-92	Institutions 2,961 Pupils 35,067	1,562 (17,633)	1,261 (12,492)	5,784	65,192
1901-02	Institutions 3,406 Pupils 49,688	1,145 (17,472)	1,520 (17,118)	6,071	84,276
1911-12	Institutions 2,814 Pupils 44,356	870 (19,226)	1,498 (19,827)	5,182	83,409
1921-22	Institutions 1,036 Pupils 22,324	629 (16,296)	1,072 (18,183)	2,737	56,803

* Figures are not available for Jhansi and Kumaun.

N.B.—Figures for Oudh are included from 1891.

TABLE V—DIRECT EXPENDITURE FROM ALL SOURCES ON

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Year	Tahsili (Middle) Schools		Primary Schools		Cost per head of educating a pupil in primary school	Total (direct and indirect) expenditure on all types of education (except indigenous schools).
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls		
1851	Rs. 8,352	...	Rs. 1,680	(Not available)	...	Not available.
1861-62	Rs. 52,201	...	Rs. 1,26,900	Rs. 5,731	...	Rs. 8,25,416 (includes the estimated cost of indigenous schools.)
1871-72	Rs. 56,731	...	Rs. 3,50,010	Rs. 33,622	...	Rs. 16,15,984 (includes the estimated cost of indigenous schools.)
1881-82	Rs. 61,910	Rs. 427	Rs. 6,22,156	Rs. 50,346	Rs. as. p. 3-4-3	Rs. 20,55,432
1891-92	Rs. 1,88,295	Rs. 1,221	Rs. 6,24,065	Rs. 1,02,134	4-12-6	Rs. 33,53,376
1901-02	Rs. 1,01,617	Rs. 13,020	Rs. 11,91,807	Rs. 2,24,778	4-5-6	Rs. 45,59,433
1911-12	Rs. 4,40,441	Rs. 31,493	Rs. 16,43,050	Rs. 2,03,051	3-8-10	Rs. 1,07,92,838
1921-22	Rs. 12,00,646	Rs. 1,66,403	Rs. 62,92,100	Rs. 4,49,399	8-13-4	Rs. 2,98,13,563
						Rs. 1,56,14,823
						*47,57,294

* Amounts spent from Local Cess, Local and Municipal Funds. † Amounts spent from the provincial revenues.
N.B.—Figures in bold type represent total expenditure. The figures under them represent the expenditure (included in the total expenditure) from the provincial revenues and local funds. The balance came from fees, private donations, etc.

TABLE VI—LITERACY IN THE UNITED PROVINCES OF AGRA AND OUDH

(The figures are given in lakhs i.e. hundred thousands.)

	1921	1911	1901	1891	REMARKS.
Literate males of all ages	15·6	15·1	14·2	15·0	
Literate females of all ages	1·3	1·1	·56	·5	
Literates 5 to 10 years males	·46	·51	·40	*	*Not given separately.
Literates 5 to 10 years females	·11	·09	·04	*	Literate males 0-15 years were 2·37 and females of the same age-group were ·11 lakhs in 1891.
Literates 11 to 15 years males	1·79	1·81	1·40	*	
Literates 11 to 15 years females	·20	·16	·07	*	

N.B.—In 1921 the populations of the province had decreased and on the eve of the census the influenza epidemic of 1918-19 carried away a large number of men, women and children many of whom were literate.

TABLE VII—POPULATION IN THE UNITED PROVINCES OF AGRA AND OUDH

[In lakhs i.e. hundred thousands.]

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Population	1921	1911	1901	1891	REMARKS
Total (both sexes and all ages)	465	480	485	477	Including figures for Indian States in the Province.
Males (of all ages) ...	244	251	250	247	
Females (of all ages) ...	221	229	235	230	
Males 5—10 years ...	33·5	33·0	32·0	32·3	
Females 5—10 years ...	30·4	30·0	29·1	29·1	Excluding figures for Indian States in the Province.
Males 11—15 years...	29·0	30·2	30·9	28·3	
Females 11—15 years	22·0	23·2	24·7	21·3	

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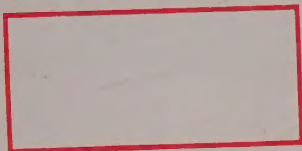
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